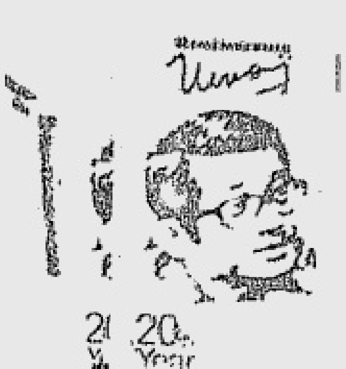
Coup talk sends peso plunging to 31-month low

Story below, Col. 1



PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Lacson to ask Paris to investigate Mike A

By Christine O. Avendaño

DISAPPOINTED with the inaction of the Anti-Money Laundering Council, Sen. Panfilo Lacson said he would ask the help of the Paris-based Financial Action Task Force (FATF) so that several bank accounts that First Gentleman Jose Miguel Arroyo allegedly opened to launder campaign contributions to President

LACSON/ A15

/56

Friday, August 22, 2003 ★★ 54 pages / 6 sections / vol. 18 / no. 255 P15 website: www.inq7.net

Ninoy
THE NATION REMEMBERS

ERNIE U.SARMIENTO

THE SIGHT and sound of the yellow crusaders led by former President Cory Aquino and President Macapagal march down Ayala Avenue to celebrate the heroism of Ninoy Aquino, which sparked the peaceful revolt that toppled the Marcos dictatorship.

Swiss lawyer claims $683-M Marcos loot

Yellow confetti back in Makati

By Margaux Ortiz, *Metro* **and Jerome Aning**

YELLOW confetti rained on parts of Metro Manila yesterday, while flags flew at half-staff across the country, on the 20th anniversary of the assassination of Marcos arch-rival Benigno "Ninoy" Aquino Jr.

Commemorative rites were held right on the tarmac of the international airport where he was shot, at the opposition leader's monument in Makati City, along Roxas' Boulevard in Manila, where Aquino's cortege had passed in one of history's largest funerals, and at the Manila Memorial Park in Parañaque City,

YELLOW/ A17

Tita Cory is my role model—Glo

By Gil Cabacungan Jr.

THE PRESIDENT used the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the assassination of Ninoy Aquino to talk once again about her role model: Aquino's widow. President Macapagal-Arroyo said she looked up to former President Corazon Aquino, especially because of how she dealt with mutinous factions in the military.

During an interview on the television show "Morning Girls" shot on location at the Manila Memorial Park, Ms Macapagal

TITA/ A17

THREE PRESIDENTS AND A MONUMENT: Former President Fidel Ramos, President Macapagal and former President Cory Aquino after the wreath-laying rites at the Aquino memorial at the corner of Ayala Avenue and Paseo de Roxas. EDWIN BACASMAS

Greggy Araneta hand seen in latest legal move

By Arlyn de la Cruz, *Contributor*

ADDING to about 10,000 Filipino claimants, the post-Marcos human rights victims and the Marcos heirs themselves, now comes a Swiss lawyer staking a claim on the $683 million in Marcos Swiss accounts that the Supreme Court has forfeited in favor of the government.

Patrick Foetish, who planed in from Switzerland Tuesday night, said he was representing the Maler, Arelma Inc., Aguamina, Avertina and Sandy Foundations.

"I represent the interest of the foundations. I have to block any effort (by the government) to get the accounts in escrow if no judgment is rendered based on a trial," said Foetish, who left Manila on Wednesday evening.

The INQUIRER learned that the Swiss lawyer was reportedly brought to the country by Greggy Araneta, husband of Irene, the youngest daughter of the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos.

Contrary to the position of the Supreme Court, Foetish said the Marcoses "have nothing to do with the foundations."

In its July 15 decision, the Supreme

SWISS/ A15

Lifestyle checkers widen hunt for gov't millionaires

By Clarissa S. Batino, *Business*
Armand N. Nocum
and Juliet Labog-Javellana

THE FINDINGS of the Transparency Group on the millionaires in the Bureaus of Internal Revenue and of Customs will serve as the take-off for a wider lifestyle check on employees of the government's two biggest revenue-generating agencies, Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho said yesterday.

"The Department of Finance has access to the same information, and it will be the starting point of more investigation," Camacho said in an interview. "First, we have a basis for comparing if their lifestyles are commensurate to their net worth. Second, we can check the means by which they achieved their wealth."

Nick Conti, head of the Malacañang-based Transparency Group, said its in-

LIFESTYLE/ A14

Operative says JI is in RP 'to unite armed Muslims'

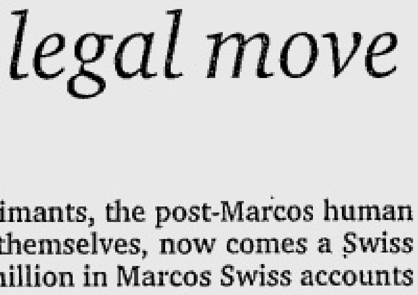
By Allan A. Nawal
PDI Mindanao Bureau

DAVAO CITY—Members of the militant Indonesia-based group Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) are in the Philippines "to unite armed Muslim fighters."

This declaration was made by Bobby Mahmud, a confessed JI operative, during a one-minute statement aired Tuesday evening on the "Foreign Correspondent" program of the Australia Broadcasting Corp. (ABC).

The INQUIRER was furnished a transcript of the statement in Arabic that was translated into English—by ABC correspondent Evan Williams, who said

OPERATIVE/ A14


THIS ONE IS FOR ORDINARY DAYS AND THIS ONE IS FOR THE HOLIDAYS

Battle heats up under the sheets

WASHINGTON—The "blue bomber" faces competition within weeks from a new orange rival in the multibillion-dollar market to spice up life under America's bedsheets.

And in a few months a potentially stronger competitor—the yellow

BATTLE/ A15

Coup talk sends peso to 31-mo. low

By Clarissa S. Batino, *Business*

RUMORS of another coup attempt, corruption charges against First Gentleman Jose Miguel Arroyo, and a court ruling suspending the central bank governor yesterday dragged the peso to a new 31-month low against the US dollar.

The peso slid for the third successive day, finishing at 55.265 to the dollar at the Philippine Dealing System, down from Wednesday's close of 55.19. Volume rose to $122 million from $82.5 million on Wednesday.

Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho voiced concern that the peso may be depreciating too fast as the currency even weakened to 55.28 during Thursday's trading before making a slight recovery.

The peso reached its all-time intraday low of 55.75 on Jan. 17, 2001, three days before massive protests forced then President Joseph Estrada to abandon Malacañang and pave the way for his replacement by then Vice President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo.

"There are fundamental reasons for the dollar-peso exchange rate to rise, but it should not reach a level that we are seeing now," Camacho said in a radio interview, although he declined to give the peso's correct valuation.

He agreed with the assessment of forex dealers that a combination of low remittances from overseas Filipino workers and a seasonal peak in dollar demand

COUP/ A14

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Northern Luzon will have rains and gusty winds. Rest of Luzon will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. Visayas and Mindanao will be partly cloudy to cloudy with isolated rainshowers and thunderstorms.

SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY: RAY LEYESA, PDI RESEARCH/08/22/03

Second FRONT PAGE

E-mail: pr_news@inquirer.com.ph

Metro Manila	Cloudy with Rains	Iloilo/Bacolod	Partly Cloudy
Baguio	Cloudy with Rains	Roxas	Partly Cloudy
Tuguegarao	Occasional Rains	Cebu	Partly Cloudy
Laoag	Cloudy with Rains	Tacloban	Partly Cloudy
Clark Zone	Cloudy with Rains	Gen. Santos	Partly Cloudy
Tagaytay	Cloudy with Rains	Zamboanga	Partly Cloudy
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	Cagayan de Oro	Partly Cloudy
Calapan	Cloudy with Rains	Davao	Partly Cloudy

Mutineers defiant as pre-trial starts

THE MILITARY yesterday opened a pre-trial investigation that could lead to the court-martial of 356 mutineers allegedly involved in the July 27 failed coup.

However, the first group of six officers and 19 enlisted men summoned refused to cooperate with proceedings, said Judge Advocate General Brig. Gen. Mariano Sarmiento.

Only the enlisted men actually appeared before an investigating panel at the Jago office in Camp Aguinaldo yesterday.

Sarmiento said the panel would deal with the enlisted men first before calling in the officers who led the rebellion.

The 19 soldiers refused to accept charge sheets or answer questions from the panel, saying they had been advised by their lawyers not to do so.

They still would be given 10 days to file counter-affidavits to charges of mutiny or sedition, disrespect to the President, violation of military discipline, wrongful disposition of weapons and unbecoming conduct, Sarmiento said.

The charges, covered by the Articles of War, are separate from the coup indictment they already face under the Revised Penal Code.

"Later on, we will determine who will be charged for particular violations of the Articles of War," Sarmiento said, adding that the military may absolve soldiers who were "misled" by their superiors into supporting the mutiny.

The five-man investigative panel is headed by Col. Gilberto Jose Roa.

The sullen-looking uniformed Marines were each asked to stand before the panel in the Jago court room and asked by Roa if they would accept a copy of the complaint.

They all refused despite Roa's explanation that they had to be provided copies of the charge sheet so that they would be informed of the nature of the charges and so their lawyers could prepare their defense.

"We have our own lawyers. Before we accept anything our lawyers should be present. This hearing came as a surprise, we didn't know we would be called today," said Cpl. Aladdin Gomez.

"We have no counsel present," added Sgt. Jude Arquisola.

Some of the soldiers told reporters that Homobono Adaza was acting as their counsel. Adaza is also the lawyer of the six junior officers accused of being the ringleaders.

Roa told the soldiers that they had waived their right to accept a copy of the complaint, and adjourned the hearing that lasted 45 minutes.

The 19 soldiers, the first batch to undergo pre-trial investigation, were those who yielded before the 5 p.m. deadline set by President Macapagal-Arroyo for their surrender on July 27 at the Oakwood Premier hotel.

Sarmiento said the pre-trial investigation would continue despite the soldiers' refusal to accept copies of the charge sheet. He said it was not necessary for lawyers to be present such charge sheets are given.

The pre-trial investigation, which is equivalent to the civil court's preliminary investigation, will not be limited to the Jago courtrooms, but will be held in camps where the rest of the 356 mutineers are confined.

The hearings will proceed on a daily basis, Sarmiento said.

"We will just expedite the conduct of the pre-trial investigation, considering they are very numerous. At present we have 356, more are forthcoming," he said.

Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes said that fears of double jeopardy—that is, that the accused would be tried twice for the same set of charges within the same justice system—were unfounded.

"First of all, the civilian and military justice systems have distinct jurisdictions and procedures," he said in a statement.

He said the Jago was coordinating closely with the justice department to ensure that the charges are clearly delineated between those covered by the Revised Penal Code and those that fall under the Articles of War.

Meanwhile, Chief of Staff Gen. Narciso Abaya visited troops in the south yesterday, warning them not to allow themselves to be "used" by disgruntled officers.

"Any attempt to grab power from the government will not prosper," Abaya told hundreds of officers and soldiers at the military's Southern Command headquarters in Zamboanga City. *TJ Burgonio with a report from AP*

Bishop Bacani back

By Blanche S. Rivera

NOVALICHES Bishop Teodoro Bacani, who left the country amid allegations he had sexually molested his secretary, is back in the country after more than two months in the United States.

He is said to be staying with a relative at an undisclosed place, his eldest brother Pastor Bacani said yesterday in a phone interview.

Pastor added that the bishop was not likely to meet with anyone, including his family, any time soon because he wanted to rest.

He said he learned of Bacani's return only after the bishop phoned him from the Ninoy Aquino International Airport the other night.

Bacani did not discuss his plans but merely apologized that he would not communicate with them regularly because he wanted privacy, Pastor said.

"There is no urgency to meet with him. We respect his request for privacy," the elder Bacani said.

He added that the bishop sounded fine and did not seem anxious about any controversy that may be sparked by his arrival.

Bacani's return apparently did not surprise his family and friends, most of whom expected him to be back within the month.

Many expect Bacani to grace the installation of the first bishop of the newly created diocese of Caloocan today.

The Catholic charismatic group El Shaddai, which has Bacani for its spiritual adviser, will celebrate its anniversary this Sunday, fueling speculation that Bacani may make his first public appearance soon.

Msgr. Jesus Romulo Rañada, Bacani's spokesperson in Novaliches, said the parishioners would be glad their bishop is "home."

NEWSBRIEFS

Pinoy missing in Baghdad blast

ASIDE FROM THE TWO Filipinos who were killed, one remains missing and another was wounded in the suicide-bombing of the United Nations headquarters in Baghdad last Tuesday. Acting Foreign Affairs Secretary Franklin Ebdalin said the whereabouts of Meliton Mondejar remained unknown but his name was not on the list of the 17 people killed in the attack. Ebdalin named the injured Filipino as Malla Acosta, a radio operator at the UN office, who was taken to a hospital in Amman, Jordan, for treatment of contusions and bruises.

Ebdalin said nine other Filipinos working at the UN office were unhurt and had been accounted for. Two of them—Nelson Ranjo, a radio operator, and Efraim Pinlac, who was with the World Food Program—were in the building but were uninjured. The rest—Jose Aguirre, Catalina Villaruel, Gigi Escobar, Vicky Pangilinan and Noel Buscayno—were either on leave or had been assigned to other Iraqi cities.

Gerald G. Lacuarta

Thai PM coming

THAI Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra is set to spend two days in the Philippines next month on an official visit to boost security and economic cooperation, the foreign office said yesterday. Thaksin was to give a lecture on his economic management style as well on his government's tough anti-drug campaign, which has been copied by President Macapagal-Arroyo in going after drug gangs.

The Thai leader is also expected to hand over four OV-10 military planes during his Sept. 7-8 visit and meet with Ms Macapagal to forge stronger antiterror cooperation.

AFP

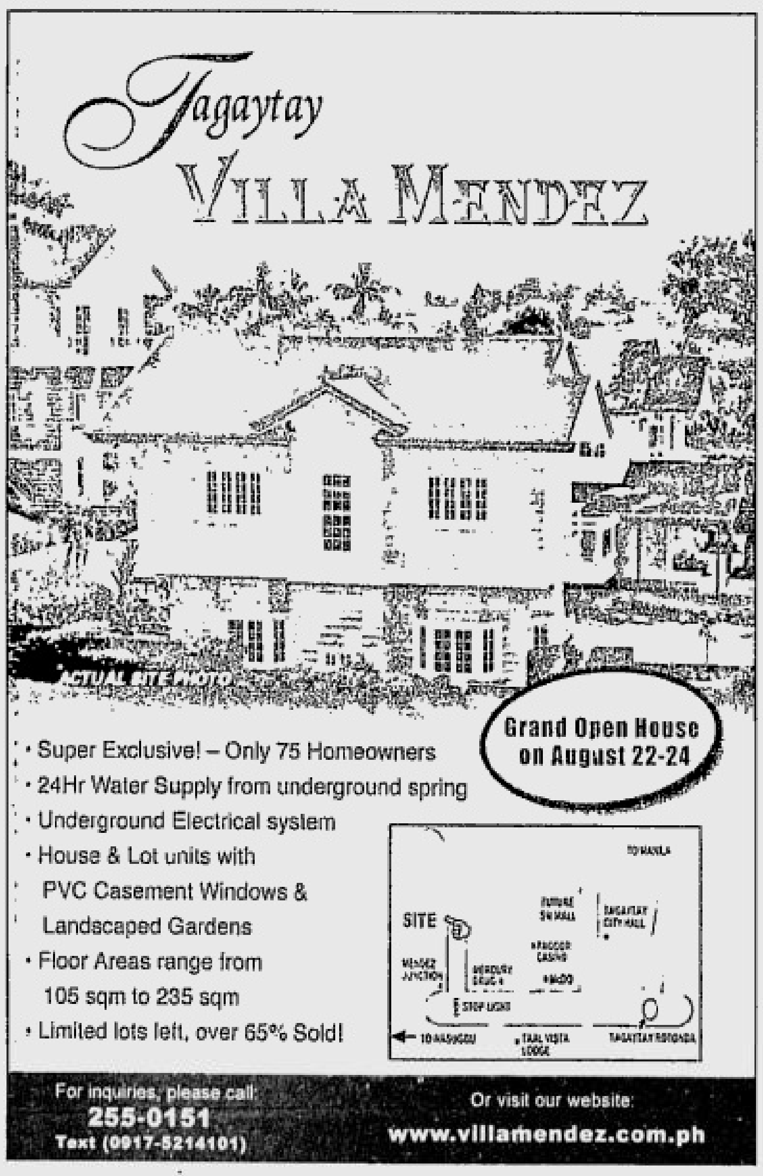
Ping told to pay up

By Juliet L. Javellana

A UNITED States court has ordered Sen. Panfilo Lacson to pay businesswoman Blanquita Pelaez $3 million in civil damages arising from a handcuff deal when he was still Philippine National Police chief.

Pelaez relayed the news, adding that Lacson's US bank accounts would be opened after Superior Court of California Judge James A. Richman denied on Aug. 19 the senator's appeal to set aside the default judgment against him.

Lacson filed the motion on Sept. 17, 2002.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One year after Arjan Erkel's kidnapping, MSF considers the investigation to be a failure, and calls for more action by the Russian authorities to resolve the case.

Geneva/Moscow, August 2003 – On August 12th it was one year since Arjan Erkel, an MSF humanitarian volunteer, was abducted in Makhatchkala, capital of Dagestan, a Republic of the Russian Federation. MSF expresses its indignation about the lack of results in the Erkel case.

"It is a scandal that, after one year, our colleague Arjan Erkel is still missing. This can only be attributed to the mishandling of the investigation and a lack of commitment by Russian authorities. The presence of two intelligence agents at the scene of abduction, and the fact that they stood by while Arjan was kidnapped, should surely increase their motivation to resolve this case. However, to our dismay, the investigation was halted in November 2002 and only reopened in May 2003. We were not told of this but instead authorities kept assuring us they were doing everything to secure Arjan's release," said Dr. Morten Rostrup, International President of MSF.

During the St. Petersburg Russia/EU summit in May 2003, President Putin made public assurances to the Dutch Prime minister to deploy Russian services in order to resolve the case – but no results have been forthcoming to date. MSF believes that the Russian authorities must again be reminded of their legal responsibility to redress the situation.

MSF is also disappointed by the reserved attitude of the Dutch government towards the Russian political authorities in this regard. More generally, the support provided by the international community, in particular key Western governments, lacked intensity.

Rostrup said: "it is difficult to understand why governments have been so reluctant over the past year to hold the Russian authorities accountable for their lack of commitment in resolving this case."

To MSF, Arjan Erkel is a symbol of "humanitarian at risk" in the Northern Caucasus. The whole humanitarian community has become a hostage to the climate of violence and insecurity prevailing in the region.

MSF asks today that Russian authorities and the international community multiply their efforts in order to bring back Arjan to his family, friends and colleagues.

For more information, please contact:

In Moscow:	Mark Walsh	+7 095 776 3644
In Amsterdam:	Marieke Van Zalk	+31 654 73 8450
In Geneva:	Pere Joan Pons	+41 79 701 9989

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NUEVA VIZCAYA STATE POLYTECHNIC COLLEGE BOARD OF TRUSTEES VOTE OF CONFIDENCE AND APPRECIATION TO THE COMMITMENT AND DEDICATION TO THE SERVICE OF NVSPC PRESIDENT DR. PATRICIO P. UNDAY

WHEREAS, Dr. Unday has offered his time, talent and service to the Nueva Vizcaya State Polytechnic College, Community of Bambang and Region 02, which is a rare service dedication at this crucial time in the history of Nueva Vizcaya;

WHEREAS, Dr. Patricio P. Unday, President of the Nueva Vizcaya State Polytechnic College, Bambang, Nueva Vizcaya has decided to retire from the College due to health problems;

WHEREAS, due to the efficiency and dedication of Dr. Unday as NVSPC President which greatly enhanced the development of the college, the Board prevailed upon him to reconsider his decision to retire and instead offered him to take a leave of absence until such time that he regains his physical health;

WHEREAS, the Board of Trustees unanimously registered and made known its full trust and confidence to the ability and capability of Dr. Patricio P. Unday;

WHEREAS, in spite of such Board of Trustees Vote of Confidence and pleading for him to continue his services to the College, Dr. Patricio P. Unday opted to retire after having taken a two-month leave of absence;

WHEREAS, during the Board of Trustees Meeting on January 24, 2003, the Board deliberated on the retirement application of Dr. Patricio P. Unday and finally decided to accept and approve his retirement from the NVSPC Presidency effective January 24, 2003;

NOW THEREFORE, after having approved the retirement of Dr. Patricio P. Unday, the Board resolved as it is hereby resolved to extend appreciation to Dr. Unday for his dedication to the service, concern and commitment to the realization of the vision, mission of the Nueva Vizcaya State Polytechnic College.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED AS IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED to consider this Board of Trustees resolution an integral part of the service and Personnel record of Dr. Patricio P Unday, and,

To publish and make known this Board Resolution to all members of the NVSPC Academe, Community of Bambang, Province of Nueva Vizcaya and the general public

ADOPTED, JANUARY 24, 2003

JUNEGRACE C. DOMINGO
Board Secretary V
BOT-NVSPC

Attested

MANUEL D. PUNZAL, Ph.D.
Commissioner, CHED
Chair, BOT-NVSPC

Enough of politics —Gloria

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday called on the public to stop its obsession with politics.

In a statement, Ms Macapagal said: "It is high time for our nation to break away from the excessive preoccupation with politics and to consolidate our energies toward the indispensable tasks of public order and development."

The President noted that partisan politics has aggravated the steep difficulties faced by the people.

The President made the appeal after two major events in less than a month that rocked her administration—the July 27 Oakwood mutiny and the recent bombshell by Sen. Panfilo Lacson on the First Gentleman's alleged money laundering activities.

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Today's *What's News* questions:

1. This popular program allows netizens to converse in real time.
   a. Internet Relay Chat (IRC)
   b. Webcam
   c. E-mail
   d. None of the above
2. Any new user of a computer is called...
   a. A newbie
   b. An ignoramus
   c. A dummy
   d. An old dog
3. This pinoy superheroine was recently made into a ballet production entitled...
   a. Darna
   b. Kaptain Barbel
   c. Panday
   d. Roborats
4. Who is the editor-in-chief of the Sunday Inquirer Magazine?
   a. Alya Honasan
   b. Alya Cruz
   c. Alya Seguerra
   d. Alya Miles
5. Which of these Filipino movies are featured in this year's Makati Cinemanila Film Festival?
   a. Pila Balde
   b. Tuhog
   c. Huling Birhen sa Lupa
   d. All of the above

INQUIRER what's news TXT game

And the proud winners* of Sony Ericsson T100 cellphones (Aug. 9-15) are:

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Andrew Acompanado, Muntinlupa City
Edward Sobro, Banawa, Cebu City

* Subject for verification

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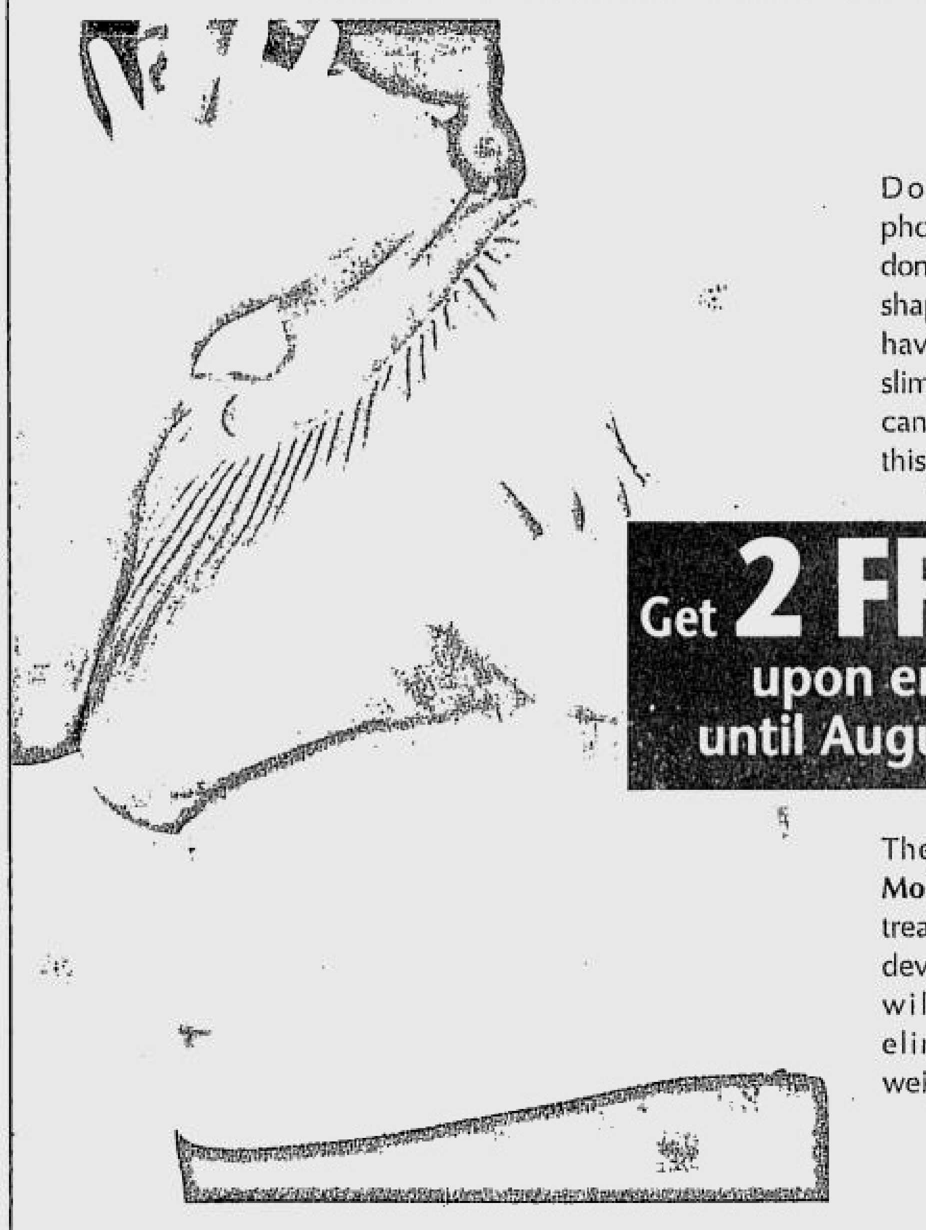

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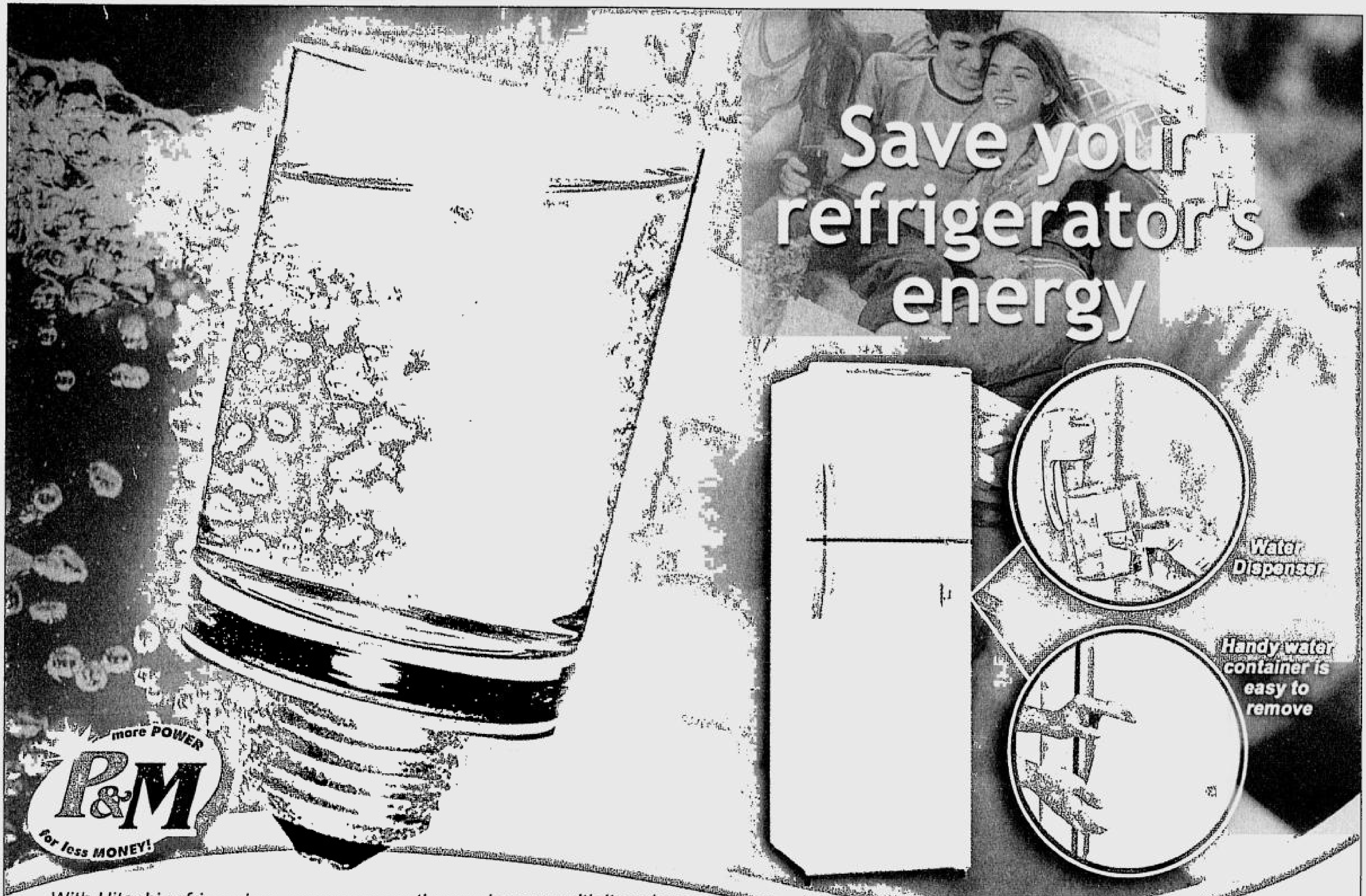
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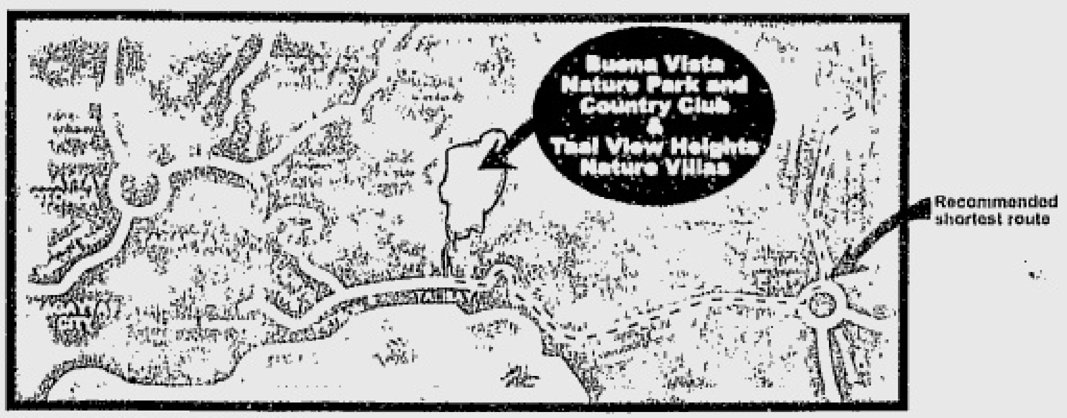
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CONDITION FOR TALKS

MILF wants troops out of Buliok

COTABATO CITY—A spokesperson for the separatist Moro Islamic Liberation Front yesterday insisted that government troops must pull out from the Buliok complex before peace talks can resume.

KABALU

MILF spokesperson Eid Kabalu claimed that Malaysia, which is acting as host and broker of the talks, was obviously waiting for the government to comply with an earlier agreement that soldiers who overrun the former MILF enclave in February return to barracks.

Kuala Lumpur has yet to issue the formal invitation for the talks that a government official said could start next week.

Mahid Mutilan, vice governor of the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao who is an adviser to the government negotiating panel, told the INQUIRER the other day that the invitation would be coming by next week.

Kabalu said, however, that without a pullout of the troops from the complex, the talks cannot start.

The military said a Marine contingent and a battalion of regular troops have been securing the complex to prevent the MILF rebels from harassing returning civilians.

Kabalu said the MILF had not received any timetable for the talks.

"What is lacking is a presence of the third-party (cease fire) observer team led by the Malaysian representatives, but I believe this is under way," he told Reuters by telephone.

"Until and unless the realignment or repositioning of troops has been fully complied with, as agreed upon by the parties, the schedule will take time," he said.

President Macapagal-Arroyo said in early August she hoped a peace pact could be signed in time for a visit by United States President George W. Bush in October.

But there is no certainty the talks will bear fruit this time when previous attempts have failed.

Two weeks ago, Kabalu said it would be "next to impossible" to meet the President's goal if the government insisted that the rebels must disarm as part of a settlement.

The delay in restarting the negotiations was at least partly due to Malaysian authorities wanting to allow time for new MILF chairman Al Haj Murad to consolidate his position, government negotiator Eduardo Ermita told Reuters last week.

Murad, the MILF's military chief, took over as leader after long-time chair Hashim Salamat, an elderly Islamic preacher, died of a heart attack on July 13. *With reports from Allan A. Nawal, Edwin O. Fernandez, Rosa-May V. de Guzman, Charlie C. Señase and Anthony S. Allada, PDI Mindanao Bureau, Reuters*

Ex-PEA exec sues critic for libel

FORMER Public Estates Authority chair Ernest Villareal yesterday filed a P10 million libel suit against Council for Philippine Affairs (Copa) secretary general Pastor "Boy" Saycon in connection with the controversial President Diosdado Macapagal Boulevard. Villareal said Saycon had "falsely" accused him of receiving P450 million from a construction company that built the road in the reclaimed area along Roxas Boulevard.

In his complaint, Villareal sought P10 million in moral damages and P1 million in attorney's fees. He said Saycon had caused him "physical suffering, mental anguish, fright, serious anxiety, besmirched reputation, wounded feelings, moral shock, social humiliation and similar injury." The suit was based on published reports that quoted Saycon as saying the former PEA chair received the P450 million money from J.D. Legaspi Construction Co. in consideration for "bagging" the Macapagal Boulevard contract. Saycon claimed that Villareal deposited the money in the Union Bank branch on Perea Street, Makati. *Alcuin Papa*

Sandigan lets go of Erap lawyer

THE COURTROOM where the case plunder against ousted President Joseph Estrada is being tried will no longer reverberate with the booming voice and sonorous prose of defense lawyer Prospero Crescini. Yesterday, the Sandiganbayan's special division granted Crescini's July 22 motion to be "relieved" as one of Estrada's court-appointed lawyers.

But the approval of Crescini's motion came with a warning for the three remaining de oficio counsels—retired justice Manuel Pamaran, Noel Malaya and Irene Jurado—to no longer attempt to delay the proceedings by citing lack of familiarity on the part of the new lawyer to be appointed to replace Crescini. *Armand Nocum*

Velasco-Lim; 82

AGRIFINA Velasco vda. de Lim, of Alcala, Pangasinan, and Caloocan City, died Aug. 20 at 82.

She left behind her children and their spouses—Benjamin and Veronica, Elizabeth Tan, Armando and Teresita Rocha, Rebecca, Tita—and grandchildren.

The body lies at the Arlington Memorial Chapels on Araneta Avenue, Quezon City. Cremation is set on Aug. 24 at 9 a.m.

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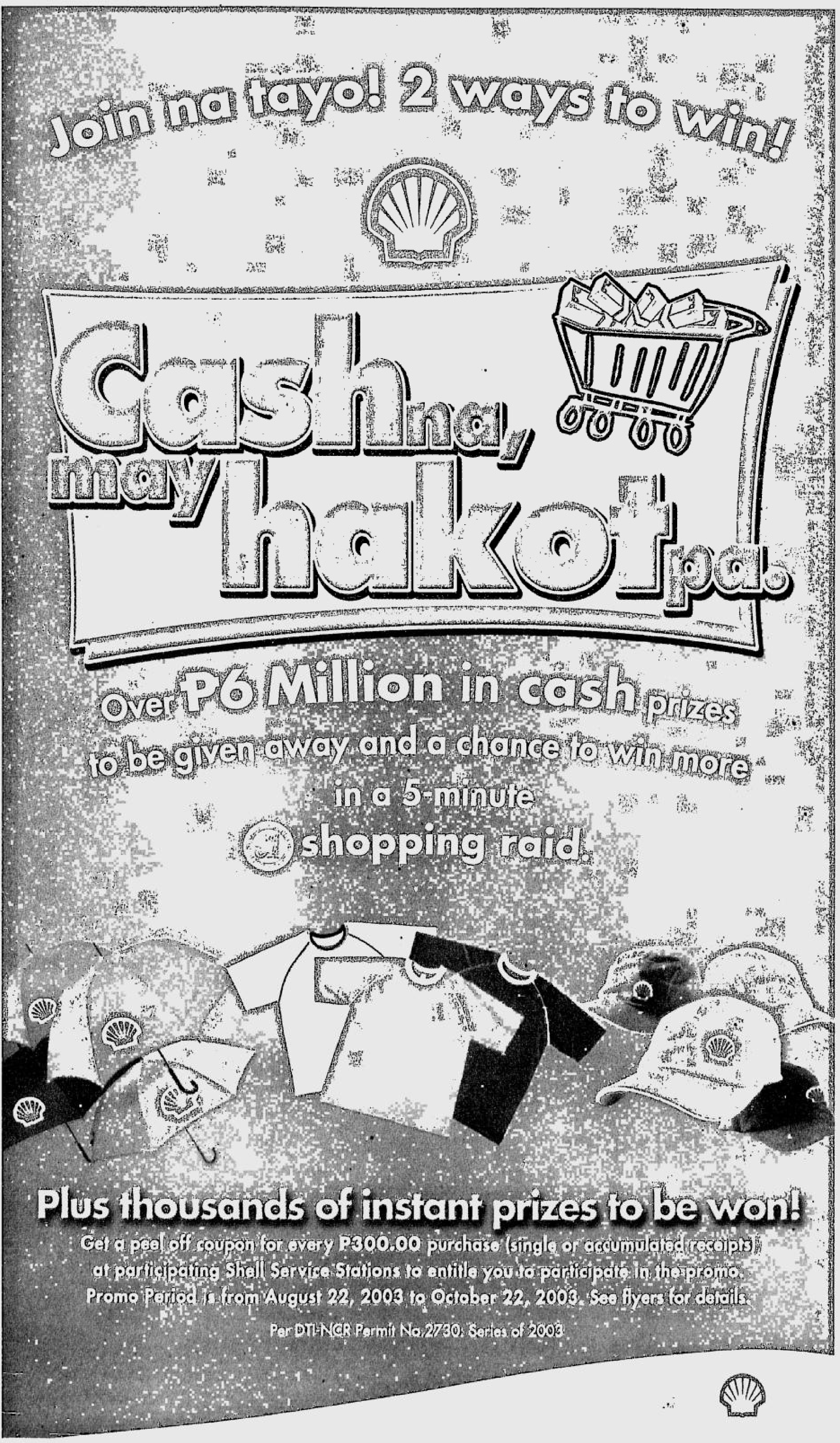

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Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 2730; Series of 2003

US travel firm sued for sex tours to RP

ALBANY, New York—New York's State Attorney General is suing a travel agency that critics say offered tours to men seeking sex from prostitutes, some underage, in the Philippines, Thailand and Cambodia.

Eliot Spitzer has also gotten state Supreme Court Justice Christine Sproat in Dutchess County to issue a temporary restraining order prohibiting Big Apple Oriental Tours from advertising or promoting sex tours in magazines and other publications, Spitzer's office announced Wednesday. The civil suit seeks to shut down Big Apple and impose financial penalties and legal costs.

"The company purports to be a traditional travel agency, but through its actions promotes prostitution and the abuse of young women," Spitzer said.

Big Apple has been under scrutiny for years by feminists and groups such as Equality Now that contend US-originated sex tours encourage the exploitation of women and children in Asia and other regions.

"Sex tourism contributes to the demand for trafficking of women, and it is a human rights violation," said Taina Bien-Aime, executive director of Equality Now.

However, calls on prosecutors in New York state to move against Big Apple did not produce criminal charges. Queens District Attorney Richard Brown said in 2000 that any possible illegal acts occurred outside New York and thus beyond the reach of state prosecutors.

The filing of a civil suit does not preclude the state from seeking criminal charges against Big Apple, Spitzer spokesperson Paul Larrabee said.

The civil suit names the operators of Big Apple Oriental Tours as 58-year-old Douglas Allen and 58-year-old Norman Barabash. Spitzer's office said the company was run from private homes in the New York areas of Poughkeepsie and Queens.

Barabash's lawyer Daniel A. Hochheiser said there is no evidence that his client or Big Apple promoted or profited from prostitution, let alone underage prostitution.

"Our client has committed no acts of illegality, civil or criminal, and we're looking forward to filing our response to their lawsuit," Hochheiser said.

If Spitzer had evidence that Barabash or Big Apple committed crimes, Hochheiser said, he would have filed criminal charges against Big Apple and "led my client out in handcuffs."

Joselito Jimeno, of the Consulate General's Office of the Philippines, said Philippine officials were cooperating with Spitzer and his case against Big Apple. Jimeno noted that the Philippines passed a law in May 2003 outlawing sex tours and criminalizing the use of the Internet to promote prostitution.

"Legislation such as this, as well as strong and definitive actions by those countries from which tours originate, hopefully will send a clear message to those seeking to profit from the exploitation of women and children," Jimeno said in a statement released by Spitzer's office.

Big Apple advertised a 12-night tour of the Philippines for $2,195, with customers being promised to be taken to bars frequented by prostitutes. *AP*

Separated twins back

PREVIOUSLY conjoined twins Lea and Rachel Awel of Kalinga arrived in Manila as separate individuals yesterday and were given a warm welcome by their father Andy, relatives and members of various charitable organizations that helped finance their operation last June.

The twins, both of whom had slight fever, were brought straight to the Chinese General Hospital and Medical Center, where they would be put under pediatric care.

A Buddhist missionary organization, the Tzu Chi Foundation, helped shoulder the cost of the operation—about P26 million—which took place in a hospital in Hualien, Taiwan, last June 28.

"We are very happy of course. Now we can take care of them and send them to school like any other normal kids," the twins' beaming mother Marieta told reporters in Tagalog.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Friday, August 22, 2003
Queenship of Mary

1st Reading: Is 9:1-6
Gospel: Lk 1:26-38

In the sixth month, the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a town of Galilee called Nazareth. He was sent to a young virgin who was betrothed to a man named Joseph, of the family of David; and the virgin's name was Mary.

The angel came to her and said, "Rejoice, full of grace, the Lord is with you." Mary was troubled at these words, wondering what this greeting could mean.

But the angel said, "Do not fear, Mary, for God has looked kindly on you. You shall conceive and bear a son and you shall call him Jesus. He will be great and shall rightly be called Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the kingdom of David, his ancestor; he will rule over the people of Jacob forever and his reign shall have no end."

Then Mary said to the angel, "How can this be if I am a virgin?" And the angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore, the holy child to be born shall be called Son of God. Even your relative Elizabeth is expecting a son in her old age, although she was unable to have a child, and she is now in her sixth month. With God nothing is impossible."

Then Mary said, "I am the handmaid of the Lord, let it be done to me as you have said." And the angel left her.

Commentary

Mary as "queen" is a rather curious title. It is, of course, born out of the love and veneration Christians throughout the ages have felt for the Mother of God. The feast we celebrate today bears witness to that love. But it also reminds us of the true meaning of the title "queen" and what it really means for Mary to be called that. In her own words in the Magnificat, Mary says that her being called blessed by all generations is because of "the great deeds God has done" for her. She isn't the source of her own glory, just as the Christian is not the source of his own. All of us, Mary included, are mere pointers to God in whom all glory and honor lies. Mary's "queenship" consists not in the fact that she is honored in herself, but because in honoring her, we honor Jesus her Son and regard him as the Lord and Ruler of our lives.

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SUPREME COURT DOCTRINES

REMEDIAL LAW (EVIDENCE/CRIMINAL PROCEDURE)—Appeal in a criminal case allows for complete review—Although the trial court's evaluation of the credibility of witnesses and their testimonies is entitled to great respect and will not be disturbed on appeal, however, this rule is not a hard and fast one. It is a time-honored rule that the assessment of the trial court with regard to the credibility of witnesses deserves the utmost respect, if not finality, for the reason that the trial judge has the prerogative, denied to appellate judges, of observing the demeanor of the declarants in the course of their testimonies. The only exception is if there is a showing that the trial judge overlooked, misunderstood, or misapplied some fact or circumstance of weight and substance that would have affected the case. In the case at bar, there appears on record some facts of weight and substance that have been overlooked, misapprehended, or misapplied by the trial court which casts doubt on the guilt of accused-appellant. An appeal in a criminal case opens the whole case for review and this includes the review of the penalty and indemnity imposed by the trial court. We are clothed with ample authority to review matters, even those not raised on appeal, if we find that their consideration is necessary in arriving at a just disposition of the case. Every circumstance in favor of the accused shall be considered. This is in keeping with the constitutional mandate that every accused shall be presumed innocent unless his guilt is proven beyond reasonable doubt. [Citations omitted.] [Justice Ynares-Santiago First Division People v. Sy Chua, G.R. Nos. 136066-67, February 4, 2003]

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RP's women presidents say they had bigger tests

THE COUNTRY'S two female presidents said yesterday they have had to deal with more difficult tests than their male counterparts in the country's macho culture.

"Maybe we are being tested," former President Corazon Aquino, who put down seven coup attempts in the 1980s, said in an interview on ABS-CBN television. "We women have to prove ourselves twice as (much as) the men.

"But as I said, my predecessor only suffered one coup attempt and he already got scared and fled," she added, referring to late dictator Ferdinand Marcos. He flew to exile in Hawaii in 1986 amid a military mutiny supported by a "people power" revolt.

Aquino said she does not claim that women leaders are better, but "maybe we are as good as the men and we have a stronger faith in God."

President Macapagal-Arroyo, who thwarted a mutiny last month, said in the same interview that "we are tested more … because if you are a woman, in our macho society, people look down on you."

She said she derives inspiration from Aquino, her role model.

The two women spoke on the 20th anniversary of the assassination of Aquino's husband, late opposition leader Benigno Aquino. He was gunned down Aug. 21, 1983, for opposing Marcos.

His death strengthened the opposition movement and eventually spurred hundreds of thousands of people -led by his widow--to take to the streets, igniting a four-day revolt that crushed Marcos' 20-year rule and restored democracy in February 1986.

The revolt, dubbed "people power" catapulted Corazon Aquino to the presidency. *AP*

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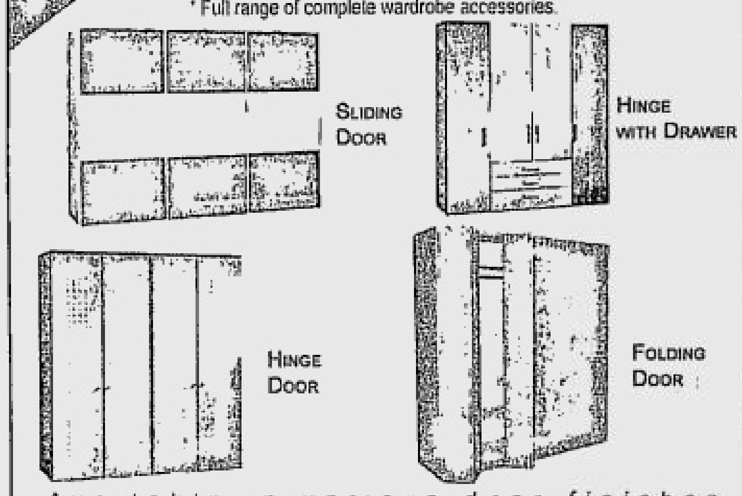

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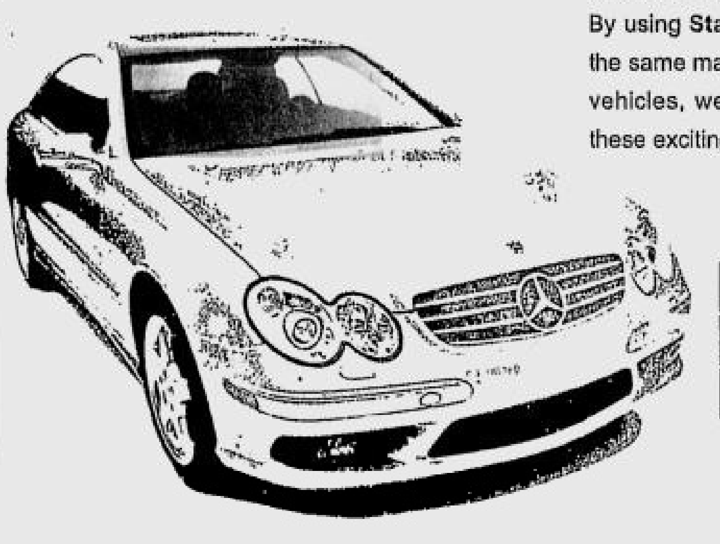

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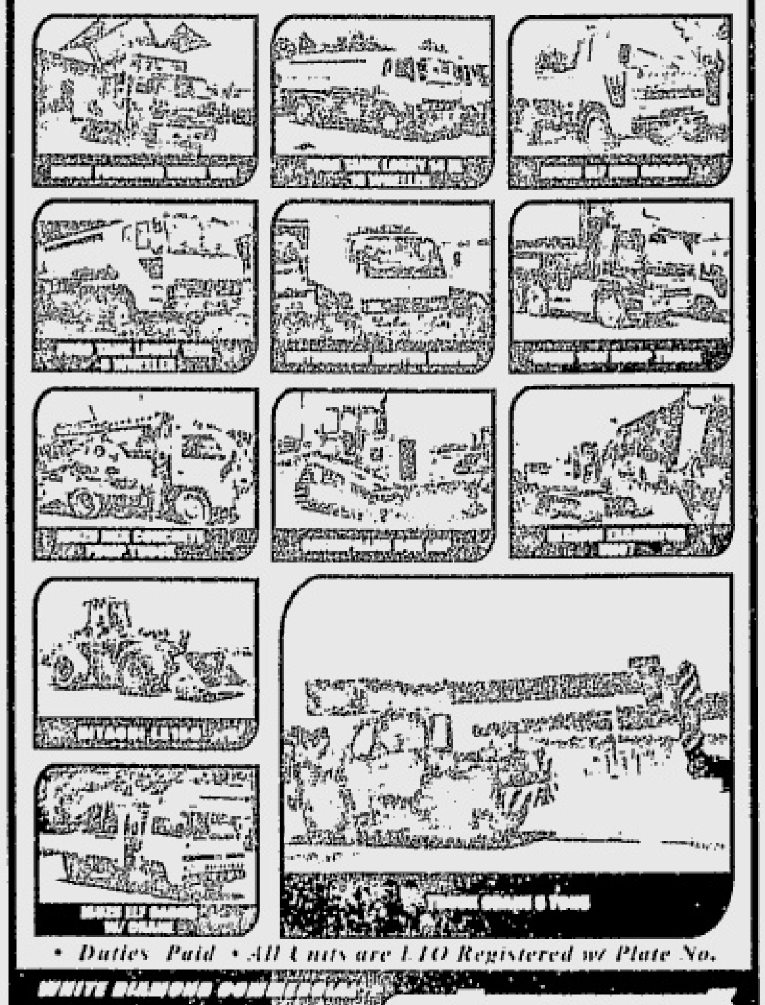

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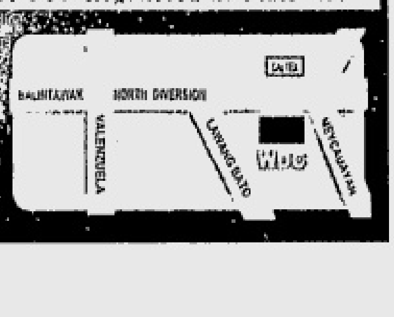

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ISSN 0116-2642 INQUIRER Vol. 18 No. 255

Email: feedback@inquirer.com.ph website: http://www.inq7.net

OPINION

THE PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER, INC. has its business and editorial offices at
•Chino Roces Ave corner Yague and Mascardo Sts., Makati City
•P.O. Box 2353 Makati Central Post Office 1263 Makati City
•Our telephone numbers are 897-8808 connecting all departments
•Editorial Fax 897-4793 / 897-4794 •Advertising 897-4807
•Circulation 527-3342 / 527-3348 / 528-0183 / 528-0186 and 528-0213 / Fax: 528-02-34.

Publisher **Isagani Yambot**
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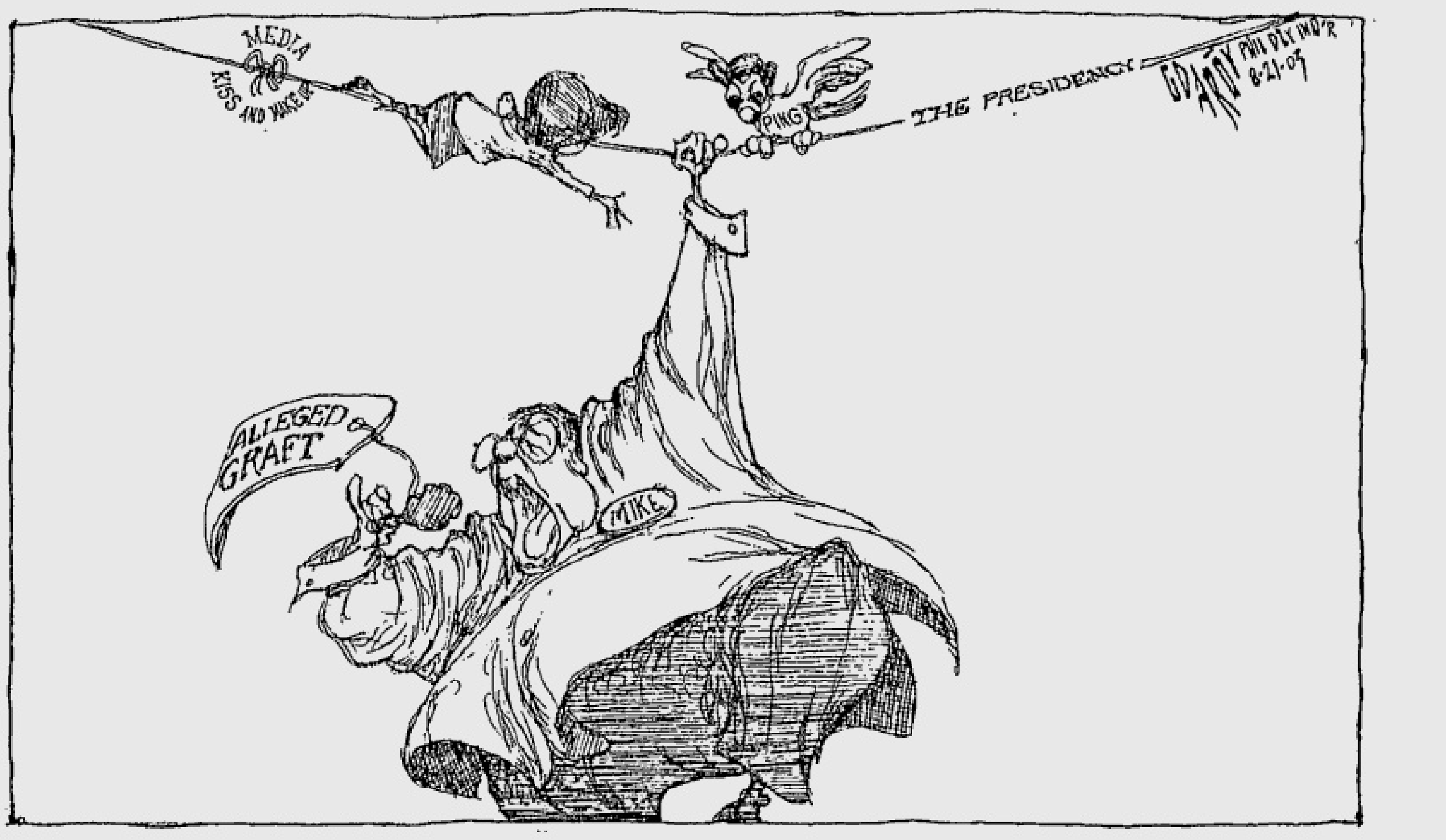

Shaky

EDITORIAL

SEN. Panfilo Lacson's charges of money laundering and corrupt activities against First Gentleman Jose Miguel Arroyo contained all the elements of a well-researched, well-documented and therefore very credible exposé. He identified Arroyo's bank accounts, dummies and accomplices. He said he has two witnesses, one of whom was just a foot away when slush funds from various sources were being counted. And in case some people missed the strong parallelism with the Estrada impeachment trial, Lacson claimed that some of the accounts were in the name of Jose Pidal, whose signature bore a striking resemblance to that of Arroyo's.

Lacson said that when Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo ran for vice president in 1998, she had a P321 million war chest. Ms Macapagal's report to the Commission on Elections stated that she spent only P50.2 million. "So what happened to the P270.8 million?" Lacson asked.

Lacson also said P5 million from an P8-million donation made by Mark Jimenez to Luwalhati Foundation ended up in the account of Jose Pidal, whose given address was the same as Arroyo's office in Makati. The same address was also used by Arroyo's secretary and two of her relatives, whom Lacson accused of serving as Arroyo's dummies. Later it was revealed Arroyo has a great grandfather named Jose Pidal Arroyo.

Lacson described Arroyo's Makati office as "a money-making machine where incredible deals are cooked and sinister schemes are plotted." He said he had documents and witnesses who would prove that "tons of money" had been delivered to that office. And then named several government officials and media men who frequented the place.

With all these details woven into his exposé, Lacson seemed to have built a solid case against Arroyo and, of course, by extension, President Macapagal-Arroyo. But now the case seems to be slowly crumbling.

The day after Lacson delivered his privilege speech, Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr. disclosed that he had been shown similar documents about 10 months earlier but had refused to make the allegations public when the group that approached him could not produce "corroborative evidence." As a lawyer, he said, he considered this to be indispensable. Besides, he added, all that the group had by way of documents were photocopies.

Was Lacson able to cure this infirmity before he delivered his speech? So far he has not shown any original document or produced his two witnesses. All he has done is titillate the public with the promise that there would be at least a part two to his exposé.

In the meantime, the Bank of the Philippine Islands has issued a certification saying that neither Arroyo nor Pidal had an account in its Perea Street branch. Thomas Toh, whom Lacson identified as one of Arroyo's dummies, pointed out that his bank account contained only P700,000 and not P7.5 million, as the senator claimed. The Tohs' lawyer also debunked Lacson's claim that they were small-time businessmen who were virtually bankrupt, saying they have the financial capacity to maintain big balances in their accounts.

Lacson also did not help his cause by mentioning the parade of personalities going to Arroyo's office. Without saying who gave how much and who received what amount, he just opened himself to charges that he was engaging in a witch-hunt. The public expects more than mere innuendoes and broad accusations about bribery and corruption from a senator even more than from rebellious young military officers.

Ironically, it is where Lacson seems to have the best documentation that his case is weakest. Philippine election law limits campaign spending to P3 per registered voter, but it is silent about the amount anyone can contribute to a candidate or how excess campaign funds should be used. It may be immoral to hold on to such funds and keep it like one's savings from honest work, but it is certainly not illegal. So what makes Lacson think he has the right to be told how the Arroyos disposed of unused campaign contributions?

Arroyo's reputation for honesty and integrity has been less than sterling, to say the least. And this adds credence to Lacson's charges. But if the senator really wants to help clean up the government, he needs to produce more proof against Arroyo than what he has shown so far.

The rich now more worried than the poor

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

AMID THE claims and denials over the Jose Pidal bank account, only one thing is certain: Jose Pidal, like Jose Velarde, does not exist. If he did, he would have come out by now and claimed the millions of pesos in bank deposits. Moreover, the National Statistics Office has no record of any "Jose Pidal"; no birth certificate, no marriage certificate, no nothing. The Toh siblings have come out and claimed the money deposited in their names, but not Jose Pidal. How can he when he is just a fictitious person?

There is indeed a similarity between the signature of First Gentleman Mike Arroyo and that of Jose Pidal but it does not prove anything. Only a handwriting analysis by experts will prove if they were made by the same person. Mr. Arroyo has asked the National Bureau of Investigation and the Philippine National Police to make the analysis, but I think the NBI and the PNP are not the right agencies to do that.

Even if the tests were accurately done and there will be a finding that the signatures were signed by different persons, nobody would believe. Can the NBI or the PNP make a finding that Jose Pidal and Mike Arroyo are one and the same? People will always wonder. The heads of these two agencies were appointed by Mr. Arroyo's wife.

For the findings to be credible, the tests must be made by experts from outside the Philippines, preferably unidentified until they shall have completed their job if only to spare them from any pressure.

Mr. Arroyo had said he is willing to face a Senate investigation—but only if the senators will shed their parliamentary immunity. That is the same as saying, "*ayoko.*" That is the standard retort of many of those exposed in the halls of Congress.

Those with clear conscience don't have to be afraid of parliamentary immunity. Whether the accusers have immunity or not, the truth remains the same. The innocent will be found innocent irrespective of the status of his accuser. But the guilty will look for excuses to avoid an investigation.

This is not to say that Mr. Arroyo is guilty. What I'm saying is that the public will think that way because that is the impression being created by the doubletalk.

* * *

The biggest victim of this latest scandal, ironically, is our national hero, Jose Rizal. He has the same first name as Jose Pidal and Jose Velarde. Suddenly, the name Jose, which was taken from St. Joseph, no less, has become disreputable. Expect many jokes about the name Jose.

One joke is that Jose Pidal and Jose Velarde will star in a movie patterned after the popular genre on police partners like "Starsky and Hutch." The title of the film of the two Joses: "Dumb and Dumber."

* * *

The lifestyle checks being conducted by the Macapagal administration are a great equalizer. Suddenly the poor are happy and the rich are worried. Flaunting one's wealth and status-seeking have gone out of fashion. In fact, the rich are now trying to hide their wealth. I know some officials who are changing their Chedengs with second-hand Toyotas.

Conspicuous consumption has become more risky in the Philippines for some time now. The conspicuous consumers are either kidnapped or robbed. Have you noticed that hardly anybody wears expensive jewelry anymore? The only thing left for status-seekers is the brand of vehicle they use, preferring, besides the usual Chedengs and BMWs which have already become "*baduy*," the 4-wheel drive vans and SUVs. But that is also going out of fashion.

With the lifestyle checks, the life for the rich, most especially the newly rich, has become harder.

People think money buys happiness. It doesn't anymore. It only exposes you to a lifestyle check and graft charges. Money can't buy happiness, only worry.

Do you know that it is much harder to make the rich happy than the poor? The rich live a life of worry. If you are a government official, you worry about the lifestyle checks. The transparency committee that makes these checks are now as feared as the Gestapo in Nazi Germany. Then there are the kidnappers and robbers. There are also the pyramid scams, fake gold bars and other get-rich-quick schemes that victimize the rich. Just because a person has plenty of money doesn't mean he is also wise. The poor are immune from these tricks.

Even billionaire businessmen live in fear and worry. Most of them are deep in debt. They can't sleep at night worrying how they can pay their loans. When the peso exchange rate dips, the importer's blood pressure rises. When the economy is depressed, businessmen are also depressed.

In contrast, the poor are easier to please. Give the squatter just enough food for the day and he is happy. Give him enough to last until tomorrow and he is happier. Give him a job and he will kiss you out of happiness.

The rich man has all the delicious food money can buy but he can't eat. He has no appetite because of worry. Besides, he has to watch his weight and his cholesterol and blood sugar levels.

Which would you rather be, rich or poor?

* * *

KAPIHAN NOTES: Monday's guests at the Kapihan sa Manila (Hotel) are Nick Conti, chief of the transparency committee that conducts the lifestyle checks, and Col. Eduardo Matillano, former coup plotter and now chief of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG).

Waiting for Pidal

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

MAO Zedong had one very good advice for people who want to wage a revolution. Do not take on too many enemies at once. Take them on one by one. You take them on all at once and they will unite to defeat you. You take them one by one and you can defeat them.

Better still, he said, make a temporary alliance with some of your future enemies to defeat a current one. That is the principle of a "united front." It is a unity with people with whom you have "contradictions" but where the contradictions are latent rather than patent. The more people you have with you, the easier it is to defeat an immediate enemy. Later, you can always turn on them. But never make all of them your enemies at once.

The same advice may be given to people who want to make an exposé.

Panfilo Lacson offers an object lesson in how not to do it. He had one very good point to make in his privilege speech, but instead of concentrating on that point, he went off in all directions in an attempt to make a bigger case and therefore make his revelations more explosive. In fact, it did not make them more explosive, it made them less so.

His strongest suit was the existence of one Jose Pidal, who has millions stashed in a bank and whose signature bears an uncanny resemblance to Jose Miguel Arroyo's. The part where he superimposes Jose Pidal's signature on Jose Miguel Arroyo's was damning. He should have stopped at that, after presenting it in the most objective way possible. Things like those do not need embellishment. They require no elaboration, they require no extravagant language.

But use extravagant language Lacson did, and embellish it he did. The common mistake of bad writers and amateurs, who always imagine bigger is better. He went on to paint the picture of a Dark Tower in the form of the LTA building, where money gets sucked in and reappears in new form, where people, including journalists, congregate to plot against their enemies, where an "Incredible Hulk" presides over the evil. Who knows? Maybe it's true. But it's just too many stories at the same time, it's too many fronts to defend.

Naturally, the people he has named as conspirators have risen to defend themselves—and attacked Lacson on those very points. As have their friends. I saw several TV talk shows over the past days that have dealt with the "visitors" of the LTA. Of course, media will seize on that, that is human interest. That has faces and controversy written on it, an explosive combination in the "newsworthiness" department.

Dwelling on those things, however, as indeed on Lacson's motives—you can easily grant they derive from self-interest—would be missing the point. The point is still Jose Pidal. Or, specifically, whether Jose Pidal is a real person or merely the alter ego of Jose Miguel Arroyo. Amid the tangle of Lacson's many accusations, that is the thread that remains worth pursuing. It's the one that doesn't break so easily.

Lito Banayo had a point when he said on TV that he found it strange that 48 hours after Lacson made his exposé, no one could still produce Mr. Jose Pidal. Erap at least made it a point to produce a Mr. Jose Velarde, even if the charade was unmasked almost as soon as it was mounted. So far, no one has come out to claim the millions deposited under the name Jose Pidal. I am sorely tempted to do so to improve my financial standing if no one wants to volunteer for it. Unless Dolphy beats me to it by signing Jose Pidol.

Of course the burden of proof does not lie on the accused but on the accuser. In theory at least, Arroyo does not need to do anything, least of all to *habeas corpus* or produce the body of Pidal. It's up to Lacson to prove he is Pidal. But it would make matters infinitely easier for Arroyo if there was a Jose Pidal. The problem is no longer legal, it is moral. The whole credibility of government, especially coming as Lacson's accusations have in the wake of the mutineers' own, hangs on the line. Frankly, I don't know why there should be a legal impediment to impounding the assets of Jose Pidal if he doesn't step out to claim them. There are sufficient grounds to suspect money laundering, enough to overrule invasion of privacy.

Frankly, too, I do not know why anyone should bother with the fact that the statute of limitations on the crime of spiriting away campaign funds has expired. The real crime is not spiriting away campaign funds—that is a matter for the campaign contributors to get pissed off about, and I most assuredly hope they ask the First Couple to give an accounting of it—it is creating an account under a fictitious name. Erap, of course, asked what was so wrong with that—and probably had more reason to, given that Joseph Estrada wasn't his real name to begin with, it was his screen name. His impeachers promptly gave him to see that the law forbids that, particularly from presidents. It is no less so for the husbands of presidents.

That is the only question that matters at this point, not whether Mike Arroyo oversees a Mafia-like organization, engages in the laundry business, or has corrupt media hands and/or political analysts on his payroll. If Lacson can prove Arroyo is Pidal, then the other things should follow, as day follows night. Arroyo himself has said he is willing to face his accuser, specifically to get experts to determine whether his signature and that of Jose Pidal's are one and the same. That is the first order of business.

And a most urgent one. Time is not on Arroyo's side, the text jokes multiplying by the dozen every hour. The last one I got was that Jose Velarde and Jose Pidal have one thing in common. They both studied in the same school. They're both Blue Vultures.

* * *

Comments to dequiros@info.com.ph

PMA a hatchery of coup makers?

ANALYSIS

Amando Doronila

THE ROLE of the Philippine Military Academy in strengthening democracy in this country has come under the glaring spotlight of scrutiny in the wake of the the failed July 27 coup.

The PMA was conceived as the training ground of the officer corps who are to lead the Philippine military. But within a space of 17 years, between 1986 and July 2003, Philippine democracy has been rocked and threatened by eight coup attempts, all of which were led by PMA alumni.

The Philippines has had more coups than the Latin American banana republics had in the age of coups in the 1970s; and Indonesia, where the Indonesian army has played a pivotal role in toppling regimes, notably that of President Sukarno in the 1960s.

The succession of coups in the Philippines has raised questions on whether the PMA is a foreign body in a democratic ambience; whether the PMA graduates have imbibed the democratic culture; and whether the academy has, indeed, proved to be a nursery of anti-democratic ideas and methods, a hatchery of coup makers, whose education has been subsidized by taxpayers' money.

The record of PMA alumni in staging coups is unlike that of military academies in advanced democracies. The PMA is patterned after the US military academy at West Point. But the latter has never in its history produced a cabal of officers who challenged the civilian supremacy in the United States, and the authority of the American president as commander in chief of the armed forces, no matter how distasteful his decisions have been. There were, of course, impulses of caesarism from West Point graduates—the prime example being the late Gen. Douglas MacArthur who was sacked by President Harry Truman from his Far Eastern Command over a conflict of policy on the Chinese intervention in the Korean War. But MacArthur took his dismissal without a murmur of defiance despite his brilliant campaign in the Inchon landings.

Two leading Western democracies—Britain and France—have famous military academies, Sandhurst and St. Cyr, respectively, but these academies have never been the nursery of putschists. Britain and France had been imperial powers, in which their armies gave them military glories during the wars of the 19th and 20th centuries, highlighting the role of military leaders. Wellington, came under close scrutiny from the Whig opposition in the British Parliament for his cautious campaign in the Iberian Peninsula during the Napoleonic Wars.

During the Algerian war, a number of French generals were involved in coup plots against the Fourth Republic, which was cracking under the strain of the Algerian crisis, but President Charles de Gaulle, himself a brigadier general, smashed the plot after he was vested with wide emergency powers to reform the Fourth Republic, which he did starting with a new constitution that anchored the Fifth Republic, his own concept of a strong presidency in a modern parliamentary democratic context.

Despite these sporadic impulses of unrest in the French army officer corps, no coup was ever mounted to overthrow the more than 40 governments in a revolving-door regime change in the crisis-prone Fourth Republic. The parent coup was staged by Napoleon together with the directorate to restore order in the wake of the anarchy of the Reign of Terror and in the face of the threat of invasion posed by the coalition of France's neighbors which backed the move to restore the Bourbon monarchy decapitated by the French Revolution.

Despite these earlier impulses of military interventions in France, the military has been reined in, such that it has never been a threat to the continuity of civil governance in the French Republic even between wars.

No military cabal has ever emerged from either Sandhurst or St. Cyr. France's and Britain's officer corps never formed a military caste defined by their association with the academies.

Our pattern of developing a military caste is based on the unique PMA class system that has fostered bonds among the class members, bonds which have proved to be stronger than their loyalty to the larger constitutional principles, such as, the supremacy of civil authority over the military. The coups, from the 1980s and the one in 2003, illustrate how fragile the loyalty of the PMA-trained officer corps is to Philippine democracy and we should be disturbed by this. From the political statements of the numerous coups, the PMA curriculum has produced not only a culture, but also the dangerous "savior mentality" that holds that the officers have the right to overthrow a government, according to their norms of legitimacy.

Why the PMA and its class system have been the breeding ground of officers who spearheaded coups should be one of the key issues that the Feliciano Commission should address in its inquiry into the Oakwood events. We are nursing in the PMA the virus of anti-democratic culture that is incompatible with the principle of civilian supremacy over the military, which notion is the cornerstone of constitutional democracy scorned by the putschists of the Honasan-RAM and Oakwood vintage.

Our version of military intervention in politics is out of step and outside the wave of democratization for the past 30 years. That Oakwood took place 17 years after the restoration of democracy should shock us into realizing that our democracy is incubating its own enemies in one of its own elite leadership institutions—the PMA and the military establishment.

20 years hence

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

I WAS a young mother in 1983, editing a (short-lived) women's magazine and with my husband and small son, had just moved into our new home in Antipolo.

On Aug. 21 that year, a Sunday, I was home feeling out of sorts and was glued to the TV watching the coverage of the arrival of Sen. Benigno "Ninoy" Aquino from three years of exile in the United States.

I must confess that while I greatly admired Ninoy the man, particularly his spunk and spirit as demonstrated in his TV interview during the Batasan elections when he ran for assemblyman from his detention cell, I was also suspicious of his motives for coming home. Like all activists in the early 1970s, I had known him mainly as a politician, and mainly as the best bet of the opposition Liberal Party for president when Marcos finished his second term. Martial law put all those plans and prospects on hold—if not dashed them completely. And like most other opposition figures who were arrested and detained on spurious charges, Ninoy Aquino fell into the obscurity of prison. He would prove to be a charismatic figure even within the bowels of Marcos' military prison system, though. But in my cynicism, I believed that if and when Ninoy and his ilk assumed power, they would install a regime of nothing but "more of the same."

So I wasn't all that excited about Ninoy's homecoming, even if the headlines in the Marcos-controlled press, promising instant arrest and detention for the senator upon his arrival, whetted my curiosity and morbid interest. Yet nothing prepared me for the shock of the sight of the white-suited figure lying sprawled on the tarmac, with a dark-clothed figure lying nearby, as soldiers with long arms theatrically patrolled the perimeter.

Perhaps with the rest of the nation, I whispered to myself: "They did it. They actually had him killed."

* * *

AS it turned out, the reason I was feeling out of sorts that Sunday was because I was pregnant. I would only find out about it more than a week later when, staying late into the night at the office, rushing to meet our production deadlines, I felt myself bleeding profusely. I had lost a child even before I knew I was carrying one.

I heard about the historic funeral of Ninoy Aquino on the operating table as my doctor prepared to work on me. Woozy from the anesthesia, I remember her and the nurses trading talk of the sights they encountered the day before: of the thousands of people joining the funeral cortege, the hundreds of thousands just lining the route and cheering and crying, the feeling of solidarity and comradeship. Even when it started to rain, friends would tell me later, no one felt compelled to leave the march. And when a few mourners started to take out their umbrellas, there were shouts of: "*Bawal ang payong! Huwag matakot sa ulan* (No umbrellas! Don't be afraid of the rain)!"

I felt remote and removed not just from current events but from the rest of the world. Miscarriage (and this was my second) is an odd emotional event. It is attended by sorrow and mourning, and yet one feels somehow unqualified for such deep emotion. So as with the first episode, all I was left with was numbness and loss.

* * *

A FEW months later, the magazine was closed down and I found myself at a career crossroads. All that time I had sought to escape "hard-nosed" journalism in an era of repressed media. A friend and classmate in college says the situation we journalism graduates of our era faced was unique, for even before we were through with college, our career prospects had already been cut down. Fired up by the idealism and activism of the early 1970s, we dreamed of being crusading journalists who would change the world. But when we left the campus, diploma in hand, we discovered that if we wanted to be journalists, we would have to make compromises from the first day on the job. I told myself: "No thank you," and escaped into the world of magazines.

But now, Ninoy's death, as it had with most everything else, changed the media landscape drastically. In the wake of his death and the massive, popular outrage it sparked, new forms of media flourished. Journalism was no longer the refuge of the cowed and co-opted. The "alternative press" was born.

So it is to Ninoy that I, along with most other active journalists today, owe my career—or at least the turn it has taken. If only for this, I remain grateful to his memory and to his sacrifice.

* * *

SO it is with some irritation and impatience that I listen to younger journalists wonder whether Ninoy's death, and the "People Power" uprising it led to, ever changed anything in this country.

True, our situation can prove exasperating and frustrating, not just sometimes, but most of the time. And the full agenda for social change that Ninoy was crafting has yet to be met. But we need only look back 20 years to realize just how far we have gone. And journalists, of all people, should realize just how much we owe the man who knowingly, willingly and bravely, risked his life to come home and start us on the road to change.

Yesterday, at the close of the early morning TV show "Breakfast," which had a two-day "Ninoy" special, RJ Jacinto and Jim Paredes brought things to a merry end by singing "Tie a Yellow Ribbon." Tellingly, only Bam Aquino, who is Ninoy's nephew, knew the words to this post-assassination anthem. The other young hosts merely clapped and danced along to the lilting tune. How things have changed, indeed. Perhaps, if it were the "Spaghetti Song," everyone would have been singing along. But it would not bring tears to our eyes, 20 years hence.

Manila summer circa 1900

LOOKING BACK

Ambeth R. Ocampo

MANY friends who presume it is cold in Kyoto at this time of year are surprised when I complain of the heat. This place made me realize what "soupy" weather is like. It's not the heat that gets you, it's the humidity that's deadly. While most Japanese comment on this long hot summer, being a foreigner makes me see things differently. Sweating helps me lose unwanted pounds and summer also brings a symphony of cicadas singing away like mad in the mornings. Since I do not hear *kuliglig* in Manila anymore, what the Japanese probably consider noise and nuisance is literally music to my ears, proof that this wonderful place has better air quality than Manila.

Trust the tourist or the foreigner to comment on what we see and experience every day but fail to notice. Weather is one of the things that is always mentioned in travelers' accounts of the Philippines from the 16th to the early 20th centuries. Ask a Filipino to describe the weather or seasons and he will say there are only two—dry and wet. Thus, while reading Fredrick Sawyer's "Inhabitants of the Philippines" (1900), I stopped when he described three types of seasons in the Philippines: "Rainy" from July to September; "Cool" from October to January; and "Hot" from February to May. He even recommends leaving Manila in May which is the worst time of the year, a month of fevers and funerals! Manila at this time of year can also be terribly hot. Sawyer described the heat of May:

"Hot, dry winds, dust-laden, pervade the houses and have such an effect even on well-seasoned hardwoods, that tables, wardrobes and door panels split from end to end, or from top to bottom, with a noise like pistol-shot, leaving cracks a quarter of an inch wide that gape till the rainy season restores the moisture.

"At this time the heat is at its maximum, and all nature gasps or fades. Not a drop of rain has fallen for months, the roads are inches deep in dust, the rivers nearly stagnant, and covered with green scum, the whole country quite brown, the vegetation burnt up by the sun. Only the cockroaches rejoice; at this season they fly at night, and you may have a few fine specimens of the Blatta Orientalis alight on your face, or on the back of your neck, should you doze a moment on your long chair. Personally, I am proof against a good deal, but must confess that the hairy feet of a cockroach on my face or neck make me shudder."

With air-conditioning and a wide array of household pesticides, we do not have to endure what Sawyer did in 1900. Yet it is not the cockroach that worries me in the Philippine heat but those whose temper also rise with the mercury. Sawyer related:

"...Overhead, a sky like burnished copper darts down heat rays that penetrate the roofs, and literally strike the heads of the occupants. The dry air is surcharged with electricity to such an extent that every living thing feels the powerful influence; the sweetest natures become irritable, and quite ready to admit that, 'this is indeed, a beastly world.' The nervous system suffers, the newspapers relate cases of stabbing, or even running amok amongst the natives, and perhaps suicides occur. If, as not infrequently happens, you should at this time receive an invitation to the funeral of a friend or compatriot just deceased from typhoid fever, and to be buried in twenty-four hours, you will begin to wonder whether Manila is good enough for you."

Frequent baths and suitable clothes are necessary for survival. In the days without water from a tap, Sawyer suggested filling those enormous earthenware tubs of Chinese make (now antiques used to decorate gardens in so-called lifestyle homes as featured in our style pages) with water at night. In the morning one did not get into the tub but used a *tabo* to bring water down the body from the head. After rubbing the body dry with a towel, you are supposed to be invigorated. Sawyer wondered why Americans did not bathe as much even if all their major hotels in the United States had baths galore.

Now for the clothes: "Men who are young and robust should wear white duck jackets, and trousers without waistcoats. Elderly men, or those subject to rheumatism, will do well to wear thin flannel suits. The material for these can be got from Hong Kong. For traveling and shooting, unbleached linen (what we know as *gusot mayaman* today), *guingon* and *rayadillo*, are the best materials, made into Norfolk jackets and pantaloons. I always found white or brown leather shoes the best wear, and canvass shooting boots capped and strapped with leather. A Panama hat or a solar topee, is the best head-wear. If one has to be much in the sun, a white umbrella, lined with green, should be carried. Dress is not an expensive item in Manila. Up to 1892, the washing for a whole family, with bed and table-linen, could be done for $12 per month."

Thank goodness for air-conditioning and light modern clothes. If one can learn anything from early travel accounts of the Philippines, it is to appreciate living in the 21st century. However, pollution and global warming also prove that there is always something to bear both in past and present.

* * *

Comments are welcome at aocampo@ateneo.edu

Healing and forgiving

FEATURE

Bernardo V. Lopez

MANY new stories are coming out of the Religious of the Virgin Mary healing center at Novaliches where Sr. Raquel Reodica, RVM, continues to tirelessly treat about 1,200 people every week on Wednesdays and Saturdays.

There is the story of 68-year-old Isabel (not her real name) who had complained of feeling like she had "a hollow block on top of her chest," as she continuously gasped for breath and always felt tired from lack of oxygen and poor circulation. The doctor told her she needed surgery urgently, which would cost about P500,000. Seeing an old published article on Sister Raquel, Isabel decided to ignore the doctor's advice—after all she had no money to spend for the operation—and decided to visit Sister Raquel.

Often, when there are many people, Sister Raquel goes for a "general healing" rather than a one-on-one session. She terms this "radiation healing" by which she would transfer healing energy to the crowd, rather than use it directly on the sick. The crowd could then heal themselves and everybody around. Sister Raquel would sweep her right hand slowly from right to left toward the crowd to point the radiated healing energy on everyone.

The first time Isabel went there, a general healing had just started. Sister Raquel asked the crowd to close their eyes and raise their hands. Sister Raquel noticed that Isabel, in her pain, could not even raise her hands. So she instructed the crowd to just place their hands on their chests instead. Sister Raquel prayed aloud in the vernacular and the crowd followed after her, "*Panginoong Hesus, alisin Mo po ang sakit sa aking dibdib, Gamitin Mo po ang aking kamay upang alisin ang aking sakit.* (Lord Jesus, please remove the pain in my chest. Use my hands to remove the sickness)."

After the prayer, Sister Raquel asked the crowd to rub their hands together. The sound of a thousand palms in friction had a hair-raising effect on everyone, like the swish of bamboo leaves in high wind. Upon her signal, thousands of hands were raised up to the sky, as if in total oblation. Silence fell. Sister Raquel then told the crowd to rub the part of their bodies where they felt pain or sickness while shouting "out, out," and to throw "it" to the ground and step hard on it. There was pandemonium as everyone shouted. The effect of thousands of feet stomping was awesome. The ground vibrated like in a mild tectonic tremor.

Sister Raquel then asked who among them felt better. Instinctively, Isabel raised her hand. She did not realize she had raised her hand without no more pain. She rose to speak. Sister gave her the microphone. She shouted, "*Wala nang* hollow block *sa aking dibdib.*" She then broke into tears as the crowd broke into an applause.

Sister Raquel actually borrowed her pranhic ritual of rubbing hands and stomping feet from both Hindu and Catholic practices. Pranha is the Hindu term for "life force." As in Sister Raquel's rituals, the Church Sacraments require physical and ritualistic expressions—the pouring of blessed water in Baptism, or the anointing of holy oil in Extreme Unction—without which there is no Sacrament.

The effect is both psychological and spiritual. The angry stomping of feet of one's sickness is a form of prayer as much as the rubbing and raising of hands. Such a physical and emotional form of prayer on a massive scale, triggering "bamboo hymns" and "mild tremors" has a powerful prayer value. Sister Raquel believes she is transmitting the gift of divine energy to the people in prayer and oblation, but only if they are receptive to it and their faith is strong, resigning their fate in the Lord.

There is another story about a Chinese woman, a 62-years-old Buddhist who had just suffered a massive stroke from which she survived with her face terribly contorted, a busted vein above one eye.

Sister Raquel had a one-on-one session with her. From a photograph an accompanying relative had shown her, Sister Raquel saw how pretty she was even in her old age. She said she would ask Jesus, the greatest plastic surgeon of all, to perform facial surgery through her hands.

And so Sister Raquel massaged her face while in prayer, giving special attention to the vein above the eye. Sister told her to close her eyes and pray to "her God." Sister Raquel, who had healed Muslims and Buddhists in the past, did not interfere with the faith of the sick. The woman's companions were skeptical. They kept whispering to each other in Chinese. After a while, Sister told her to open her eyes. Instantly, the contortion in her face was gone. The Chinese group was hysterical. They began to weep.

The Chinese woman said that while her eyes were closed, she saw "Moses." Sister Raquel said it may not have been Moses but Jesus. Knowing they were all buddhists, Sister Raquel invited the woman and her group to pray with her in thanking Jesus for His blessings.

Among the woman's companions was one of her doctors from the Cardinal Santos Hospital. Witnessing the healing, the doctor said, "I believe in this miracle." A second doctor, who specialized in nerves, said after a later examination that, the vein above the eye had mysteriously fused together. Later, he congratulated Sister Raquel who simply said, "Not I. It is the Creator of heaven and earth."

A man who had stage-four cancer narrated, "*Sa grabe ng sakit ko, mukhang impossibleng magamot ako* (In that dire state, it seemed impossible I still could be healed)." Sister repeated her response, "Creator of heaven and earth. "*Mistulang* cancer *lang 'yan, di magagamot? Kung gugustuhin ng Panginoon.* (That is just cancer. How can the Creator of heaven and earth not heal it, if He wanted to)?"

Sister Raquel added, "You must first be pure. Second, you must believe. An act of contrition and an act of faith, that is all it takes. The best and simplest but most sincere prayers that the Lord cannot refuse do not come from philosophers, poets, theologians, intellectuals, or even priests and bishops, but from simple people, even great sinners."

For those who need healing, inquire by e-mail (below) or cellphone. For Globe, text "JESUSHEALS" to 2355, and for Smart, text "mytxt(space)JESUSHEALS" to 211. Healing sessions are held Wednesdays and Saturdays. Mother Ignacia Healing Center, 857 Bagumbong Road, Novaliches, Caloocan City. At Novaliches Center, take Susano Road, then Deparo, then Bagumbong. No need for appointments.

Bernardo V. Lopez is a freelance journalist. E-mail to eastwind@edsamail.com.ph

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Stand up for the farmers

HOW can Filipino farmers fight cheaper agricultural imports when the government itself is the one letting in and endorsing them?

Farmers are angered over the statements made by Agriculture Secretary Cito Lorenzo urging farmers to file petitions for the application of trade remedy measures against subsidized agricultural imports.

Was it not the government which endorsed the farmers-as-importers program and pursued the mass importation of cheap agricultural, meat and fish products from abroad to the detriment of local producers?

Is the recent statement of Lorenzo an effort to appease the snowballing protests and initiatives to demand the withdrawal of Philippine agriculture and fisheries industry from trade liberalization of the World Trade Organization (WTO) due to its disastrous effect on the local industry?

In addition, while cheaper agricultural imports are killing off the local competition, the government is abandoning its duty of providing credit access by endorsing the farmland-as-collateral-bill, privatizing the National Food Authority (NFA) and promoting the export-oriented, import-dependent Agriculture and Fisheries Modernization Act (Afma).

The farmers assert that only the development of the Philippine agriculture and fisheries sector will bring about progress, ensure food security and strengthen the Philippine economy. Unlike what President Macapagal-Arroyo, the foremost disciple of globalization, promised, the liberalization of the economy only put the lives and livelihood of farmers, workers and other sectors of society at the mercy of foreign corporations instead of bringing the supposed development of the local market.

—PABLO ROSALES,
national spokesperson,
Pambansang Katipunan
ng Makabayang Magbubukid,
78-C K6th St.,
West Kamias, Quezon City

Save the trees, please!

STREAMERS currently hanging around the Visayas Avenue-Tandang Sora intersection in Quezon City announce that there is an ongoing road widening project in the area.

Last Aug. 11, 2003, a large tree near the corner of Visayas Avenue-Tandang Sora that must have been growing there peacefully for so many years, judging from its looks, was unceremoniously felled. The tree was right smack an excavation where large concrete pipes are now being laid down.

I'm not sure if there was any permit at all to cut down that tree, if ever such a permit was needed. But I'm hoping that the road-widening project and the concrete pipes-laying do not kill any more trees on the roadsides.

—MCS ABIS,
chromecat1@yahoo.com

Bondoc family cries foul

I FEEL distressed now more than ever. Sen. Panfilo Lacson is including me in his scheme to intimidate my husband Jarius Bondoc from writing against narcopolitics.

My family has been getting threats through phone calls and text messages because of Jarius' anti-drug crusade. More so from June to September 2001, at the peak of the Senate investigations into Lacson's reported criminal activities. My husband was writing about these wrongdoings in his column in the Philippine Star. As a wife and mother, I lived in constant fear for the safety of my family.

I went to see First Gentleman Mike Arroyo in 2001 to seek help regarding the threats, especially against our teenage daughter. I'm glad I did because Mr. Arroyo referred us to a colonel who arranged for a police escort for her. She was just entering college at that time. I went back to Mr. Arroyo with some pastries as a token of appreciation, and on his birthday brought him a cake.

The LTA Building is not just Mr. Arroyo's office. Our lawyers occupy some floors. As wife and assistant/secretary/driver of my husband, I go to the LTA to deliver and pick up papers. I also consulted them about a "horror tenant" who wasn't paying rent. I'm not part of any money-making scheme that Lacson is talking about. I am just a wife and mother.

If Lacson cannot refute the exposés of my husband, which are properly backed by official documents and sworn statements, why pick on me? All these political scheming and maneuverings are beyond me. How can I fight the former police chief of Erap, a feared martial law strongman and now senator who can mercilessly assault my integrity, my privacy and my family's security with his parliamentary immunity? It's so unfair!

—MARISSA BONDOC,
Fairview, Quezon City

In defense of Bayani

AL Mendoza's articles against Bayani Fernando's sincere effort to restore order in the metropolis is reminiscent of the saturnine thinking of many citizens of Marikina City at that time when a new leader was showcasing an intense resolve to clean the squalor and establish discipline among its citizens. Why not give Fernando the chance to finish his job? Many citizens of the city exhibited untarnished fealty to the new leader because they knew that he was a "revanchist" who would save the city from deterioration. These citizens gave him what he needed to reverse the pitiable situation of the city: support and belief in his cause.

Fr. Robert Reyes is another figure whose adamantine stance to block anything that has to do with Fernando is nothing but an uncouth act and plain (and dangerous) intrusion into the affairs of the state. His populistic advances against the chair will "hold no water" among those who understand the value of order in the community.

Similarly, those NGOs and many other individuals that find nothing good from Fernando's actions are showing what they really are: riff-raff.

On calling Fernando a street terrorist because of his plan to remove the trees along Katipunan Avenue, his accomplishments in Marikina City vis-à-vis planting trees in strategic and appropriate places, points to what is real. The truth is that there are many places in the metropolis where tree planting must be undertaken. The plan of Fernando can be compensated by creating a forest of trees on these open areas. Simple! Do not put an emotional disposition and tawdry actions to an otherwise simple case of easing the traffic flow. Removing a few trees along the avenue will not worsen the flood.

Fernando is a rare leader. He epitomizes sincerity, discipline, simplicity, efficiency and nationalism in governance. Let us not allow atavism to limit what this great and peculiar agent of change can do... for posterity.

—WILBUR G. DEE
'67 A Kaimito Ave.,
Phase II, TCEV,
Antipolo City

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The WORLD

Editor **Luverne B. Gueco**

Islamic groups top suspects in UN blast

WASHINGTON—A killer bomb attack on UN headquarters in Baghdad has raised the specter that Islamic extremist networks are infiltrating the country and raising the magnitude of future attacks to a new level, US experts said Wednesday.

The truck bomb attack Tuesday, the worst since the fall of Baghdad, killed at least 24 people and, according to military experts, had been confected from a mix of unexploded ordnance topped by a huge amount of military grade explosive.

"It certainly is an attack of a different scale than the ones we've seen here before, including the attack two weeks ago against the Jordanian mission," said Paul Bremer, chief US administrator in Iraq, said in an ABC television interview from Baghdad.

He said he believed "more than 100 foreign terrorists" have come into Iraq in recent months "with travel documents from countries such as Syria, Sudan and Yemen.

"Others belonged to Ansar al-Islam, which we consider to be one of the world's more dangerous groups," he said.

Tuesday's attack, which counted a high-ranking UN official among its victims, was "possibly... the work of foreign terrorists," said Bremer.

He said Ansar al-Islam, a group with ties to al-Qaida, had been operating in northern Iraq even before the US-British-led invasion.

Stanley Bedlington, former CIA anti-terrorist expert now with the private think tank, Center for Counterintelligence and Security Studies, said, "Of course al-Qaida is a major suspect."

AID worker Gillian M. Clark, 47, of Toronto, one of the blast victims. AP

The attack against the UN building is typical of the modus operandi of al-Qaida," he said, citing attacks on foreign compounds in Saudi Arabia and on US embassies in Kenya and Tanzania.

"But we still need to see more evidence" before drawing conclusions, cautioned Bedliington, adding that al-Qaida chief Osama bin Laden's group, currently present in as many as 60 countries, was a major suspect.

It is possible the UN bombing in Baghdad and other such attacks in recent weeks were the acts of stalwart elements still loyal to deposed dictator Saddam Hussein, said Bedlington.

But these attacks have increasingly been characterized by a "more complex and multi-dimensional resistance," he said.

Another terrorism expert, Neil Livingstone of the consulting firm GlobalOptions, said the recent attacks made it "apparent is that the level of anti-American activity is greater than anyone anticipated, in the resources the terrorists have available to them and the number of people involved." *AFP*

Mello told paper he didn't feel vulnerable

SAO PAULO, Brazil — Two days before being killed in the suicide bombing that destroyed his UN office in Baghdad, Sergio Vieira de Mello told a Brazilian newspaper he did not feel vulnerable to a terrorist attack.

Vieira de Mello, the top UN envoy in Iraq, was quoted in Wednesday's edition of O Estado de Sao Paulo as saying he did not think his life was in danger and that he did not sense any Iraqi hostility toward him or the United Nations in Baghdad.

Asked if he thought terrorists could target the UN offices in Baghdad, Vieira de Mello said: "I don't believe so."

The 55-year-old Brazilian diplomat and veteran UN troubleshooter was among at least 20 people killed Tuesday when a suspected suicide attacker detonated explosives loaded in a truck outside the Baghdad hotel that served as the UN headquarters.

"The local population respects the United Nations, which is not what they feel toward the occupation forces" Vieira de Mello said. "They view us as an independent and friendly organization... and know we are here to help them.

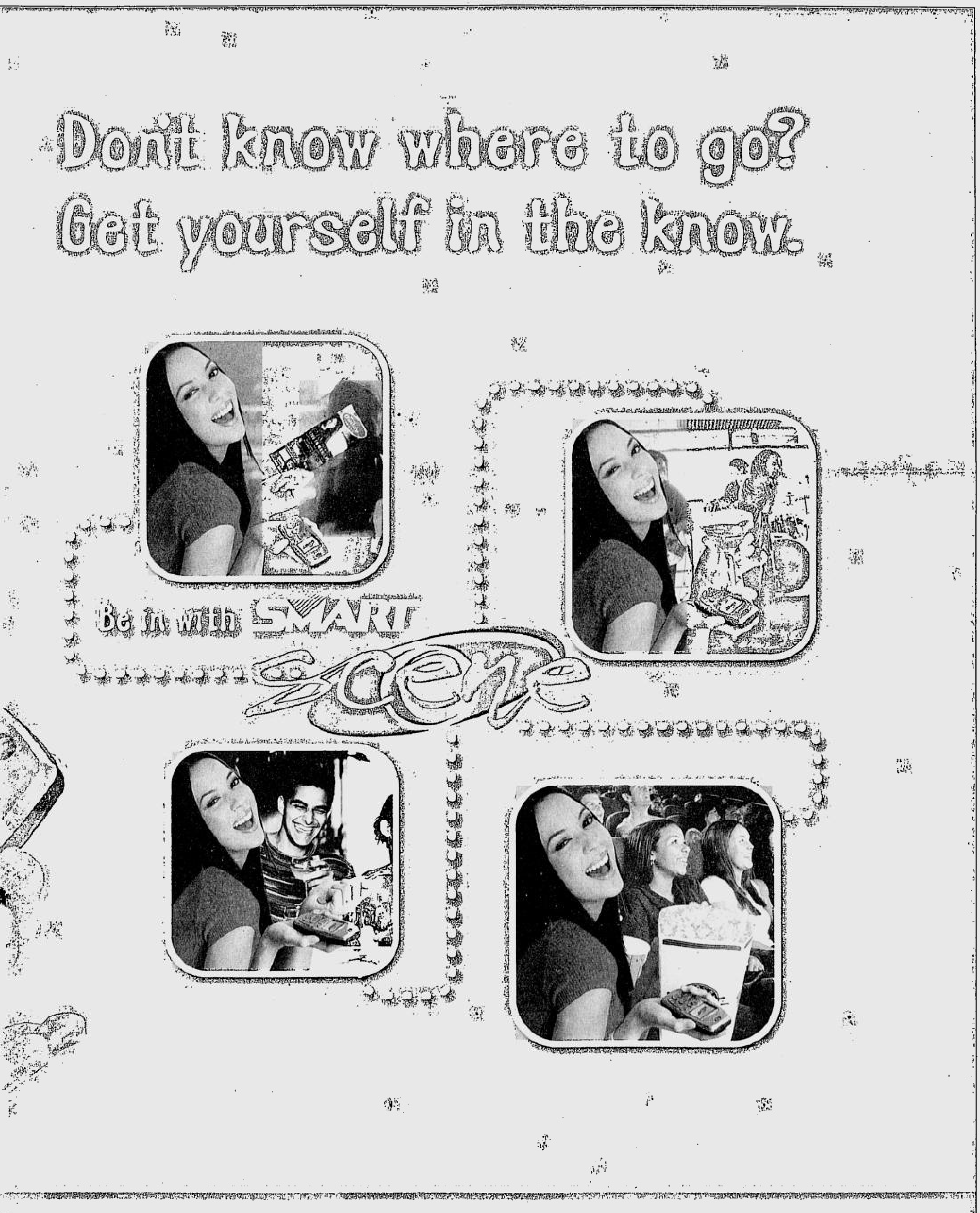
"Obviously there are situations of tension and UN personnel must obey clear orientations regarding safety... but overall I do not feel a climate of hostility."

His comments were part of a two-part interview. O Estado de Sao Paulo said the interview, which was conducted Sunday, was his last.

In the first part of the interview published Monday, Vieira de Mello said the occupation of Iraq was "traumatic" for the local population.

"It must be one of the most humiliating periods in their history. Who would like to see their country occupied? I would not like to see foreign tanks in Copacabana," he said.

Commenting on what ways to reduce attacks on US occupation forces and growing anti-Americanism among Iraqis, he said: "First of all, the coalition forces must... resolve the problems faced every day by the Iraqis like the lack of water and health services and public safety. A new Iraqi police force must be created since public safety cannot be enforced by foreigners. *AP*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Scene

Factions name new leader for Liberia

ACCRA—Liberia's warring factions named Gyude Bryant, a businessman-politician known as a consensus builder, on Thursday, to guide their broken West African state out of a generation of strife and towards elections.

Bryant, 54, had a lower profile than the other two candidates on a shortlist, but was seen as a more neutral figure to chair the interim government when caretaker President Moses Blah steps down in October.

The aim of the new administration, backed by West African countries and the United Nations, will be to end nearly 14 years of violence, disarm wild warrior bands and hold elections in 2005.

Liberia has been given fresh hope since last week's flight into exile of pariah leader Charles Taylor, who handed power to Blah. Two rebel factions holding at least three-quarters of Liberia and the government signed a peace deal this week.

"My top priority will be to heal the pain, the hurt and the wounds that we have accumulated over the years," Bryant told Reuters. "The hopes of the Liberian people are so high and their expectations are awesome."

Bryant, of the Liberia Action Party, is regarded as a canny politician capable of building consensus. He is a leading figure in the Episcopal Church, one of Liberia's main religious denominations.

Other candidates for interim leader were former UN official and vigorous Taylor opponent Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf and Rudolph Sherman, who heads a coalition of parties regarded as broadly sympathetic to Taylor.

A 58-year-old opposition veteran, Wesley Johnson, was named as the deputy chair of the transition government by the warring parties meeting in the Ghanaian capital, Accra.

Liberians have been battered by conflict that has wrecked one of the region's better-off countries and turned it into a nest of drugged-up young gunmen with no qualms about murder, rape and pillage.

Insurgencies in all Liberia's neighbors—Sierra Leone, Ivory Coast and Guinea—can trace their roots at least partly to the Liberian anarchy. *Reuters*

THE HOUSE of Palestinian Raed Abdel Hamid Mesk is blown up by Israeli troops in Hebron Aug. 21. AFP

AFTER SUICIDE BOMBING

Israel raids Nablus, Jenin

JENIN, West Bank—Israel raided the West Bank cities of Jenin and Nablus on Thursday after agreeing on military strikes against Islamic militants if the Palestinian government does not crack down on them.

Palestinian witnesses said Israeli forces entered Jenin and left before dawn, and were conducting searches in the old city and western part of Nablus. Both cities are militant bastions, and military sources said two men were arrested in the raids.

Israeli security sources said Prime Minister Ariel Sharon and security chiefs, meeting to discuss a suicide bombing that killed 18 people in Jerusalem, had agreed on wide-ranging steps to be taken against militants if the Palestinian government did not immediately crack down on them.

Israel also froze negotiations with the Palestinians after Tuesday's suicide attack, one of the deadliest in three years of violence since the Palestinians rose up seeking independence.

"If the Palestinian government does not take all the steps necessary in the war on terror, actual and meaningful steps, it will not be possible to move to the stage of diplomatic discussion," Sharon's office said in a brief statement.

The statement did not say what steps Israel could take, but they were expected to include military raids to arrest or kill militants. A senior Israeli source said the raids could begin in a matter of hours and last several days but that Israel appeared to have given them "a few more hours" to rein in the militants.

The suicide bombing left a three-month truce hanging in the balance and threatens the success a US-backed peace "road map" which outlines reciprocal steps to end nearly three years of violence and establish a Palestinian state by 2005.

Israeli forces demolished overnight the home of the Jerusalem suicide bomber in the West Bank city of Hebron, and the home of another militant near Jenin, a standard reprisal.

In an effort to stave off a tougher Israeli response to the suicide attack, Palestinian Prime Minister Mahmoud Abbas cut off contacts with Islamic militant groups on Wednesday and ordered security forces to arrest those behind the bombing. *Reuters*

Libya willing to strike deal with France

TRIPOLI—Libya said on Wednesday it was willing to find a compromise solution to France's demand for more compensation for families of victims of the 1989 bombing of a French airliner.

But it warned France that its insistence on delaying or blocking a UN vote on lifting UN sanctions until Tripoli paid more money could threaten a separate deal to pay $2.7 billion to families of the 270 people killed in the 1988 Lockerbie bombing.

France, which has veto power in the 15-nation Security Council, has threatened to block the UN vote unless Tripoli agrees to increase its compensation for families of the 170 people killed in the bombing of a UTA flight over the West African state of Niger.

The $2.7-billion Lockerbie deal dwarfs the $34 million handed over earlier by Libya for the UTA bombing, for which a Paris court found six Libyans guilty in absentia.

"There are talks going on now between the families and the Gadhafi International Institution of Charity Associations to consider the demands of the UTA victims' families toward reaching a human and moral solution to satisfy the demands of these families," the Foreign Ministry said in a statement.

The charity, which is headed by Libyan leader Moammar Gadhafi's son Saif al-Islam, previously helped negotiate the release of foreign hostages held by Muslim rebels in the southern Philippines.

The Foreign Ministry said Paris has no right to oppose the UN resolution because it had previously accepted in statements to the UN Security Council that Tripoli had met all French demands on the UTA bombing.

"Libya expresses its astonishment and rejection of the declared French stand, which does not follow the Security Council resolutions and harms the families of the Pan Am victims and prevent them from getting the adequate compensation.

"The French threatened opposition to the draft resolution submitted to the Security Council (to end sanctions on Libya), if executed, would have a negative impact on the future of political and economic bilateral relations, without bringing any benefits to the families of the UTA jet victims," the ministry said.

The bombing of the UN offices in Baghdad, and the time-consuming transfer of the Libyan funds for the Lockerbie deal could delay a Security Council vote on sanctions until next week, diplomats said on Wednesday. *Reuters*

Virus similar to SARS causes epidemic in Vancouver

MONTREAL—A virus very similar to SARS has caused a pneumonia epidemic in an old people's home in Vancouver where six people have died in seven weeks, a World Health Organization expert said Wednesday.

Katrin Leitmeyer, a WHO epidemiologist, commented on the cases a day after the sixth death at the home in the West Coast city.

"Lab results have kind of proven that these little segments that were investigated are very alike to the SARS coronavirus," she told CBC television.

The mysterious virus has hit the home in the Vancouver suburb of Surrey since the start of July.

About 100 residents and 50 members of the medical staff at the home have suffered from respiratory problems, that for most have not been serious.

The latest victim died from a "typical pneumonia" that is common among the elderly, according to Roland Guasparini, chief medical officer for the Fraser district health authority.

"This is not SARS the disease, very clearly. This is a milder disease," commented Paul Gully, a senior official at the Canadian health ministry.

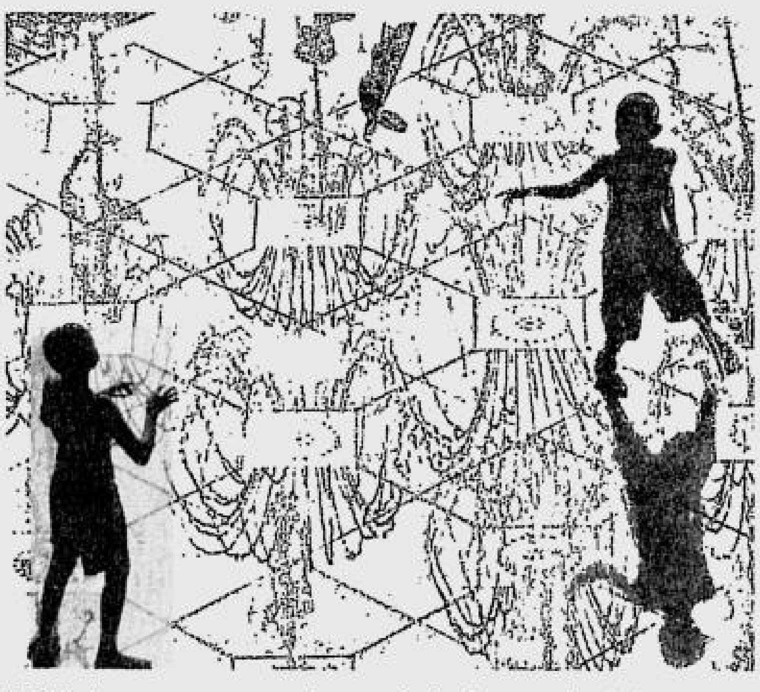
But post-mortem tests on three of the six victims showed they were carrying what appeared to be the Serious Acute Respiratory Syndrome, leading some experts to fear a new variety of SARS, the Toronto Globe and Mail newspaper reported.

"It's too early to make a final conclusion," said the WHO expert who arrived in Canada on Monday.

"Keep in mind these are preliminary results and the genome is a big one and there's only about three percent of the genome now investigated.

"At the moment, the WHO is here only to assess the situation and to look at the possible impact of this event for the global situation."

"I mean, it would have major implications if we find out that the same virus causes different clinical appearance." But Leitmeyer insisted it was "too premature" to raise fears now. *AFP*



BOYS play among water sculptures during hot weather in Barcelona on Aug. 20. Europe has been experiencing a record heat wave, with temperatures often soaring above 40 degrees Celcius. REUTERS

1,316 died in longest, hottest heat wave ever to hit Portugal, says report

LISBON—Over 1,300 more people died in Portugal in the first two weeks of August than in the previous year, and officials believe the extra deaths were mostly due to the heat wave that ravaged much of southern Europe, the national news agency Lusa said.

The figure was quoted in a preliminary report by the official National Health Institute which is due to be released on Thursday, Lusa said.

In the report Doctor Ricardo Jorge wrote that 1,316 more people died in the country between the end of July and Aug. 12 than in the same period of 2002.

In common with several other European countries, Portugal was hard hit by the heat wave, which caused both devastating fires and an increase in deaths among vulnerable sections of the population, notably old people.

The heat wave was the longest and hottest in Portugal since records began in 1856, with temperatures soaring above 40 degrees Celsius (104 Fahrenheit) throughout much of the country between July 29 and Aug. 13.

Portugal suffered the highest temperatures in Europe, recording a mighty 47.3 degrees Celsius (117.1 degrees Fahrenheit) on Aug. 1 in the white-walled town of Amarelejo on the Spanish border.

The hot weather fueled wildfires which claimed 18 lives, including that of two firefighters, and caused nearly one billion euros ($1.1 billion) in damage.

The heat also set records for water and electricity consumption and packed beaches near the Portuguese capital at night as people fought to stay cool.

The report said the number of deaths from the heat in Portugal were less than during a 10-day heat wave in 1981, when 1,900 people died, because of emergency measures put in place by the health ministry. *AFP*

'Chemical Ali' in US hands

BAGHDAD—The US military said on Thursday it had captured Saddam Hussein's feared cousin "Chemical Ali" Hassan al-Majid, number five on a US list of the 55 most wanted Iraqi fugitives.

His capture, the second of a senior Iraqi leader this week, fueled US hopes its forces might be closing in on Saddam himself and were capable of quelling a growing wave of anti-occupation sabotage and killings.

Majid, the King of Spades in a US Army deck of cards depicting fugitive members of Saddam's government, had initially been reported killed during the war in Iraq. Central Command gave no details on when or where he was captured.

Majid was a ruthless member of Saddam's clan who earned his nickname by using poison gas to kill thousands of Kurdish civilians in the village of Halabja in 1988.

He played a leading role in the violent suppression of Iraq's Kurdish and Shi'ite Muslim rebels and the seven-month occupation of Kuwait which began in 1990.

Taha Yassin Ramadan, Saddam's vice president, was captured by Kurdish forces on Monday night and handed over to US troops.

The US military has been facing daily guerrilla attacks, which have killed 63 American soldiers since the start of May. In the latest fatal attack, one US soldier was killed and two wounded in a bomb attack in Baghdad on Wednesday.

The US military also said on Wednesday one soldier was killed and one wounded in a vehicle accident after their supply convoy came under fire near Diwaniya, south of Baghdad. *Reuters*

Venezuela opposition submits 3M signatures, seeks Chavez recall

CARACAS—Venezuela's opposition Wednesday formally requested a referendum on ending the controversial presidency of Hugo Chavez, presenting three million signatures and staging a major protest in Caracas.

The rally staged in support of the recall vote stretched 1.5 km along the downtown Libertador Avenue, with organizers saying 600,000 people took part, and the government estimating the crowd at 50,000.

The opposition formally petitioned the government to hold the Chavez recall under a constitutional clause allowing such a vote half-way through the president's term.

Earlier in the day, opposition leaders said they had submitted to the National Electoral Council (CNE) 3.2 million signatures collected in February in favor of the referendum.

Chavez, who reached the midpoint of his six-year mandate Tuesday, has repeatedly said the signatures were worthless.

Authorities said the CNE cannot recognize the signatures because its new leadership has not yet been formally approved.

Attorney General Marisol Plaza also said Wednesday that the signatures should not have been gathered ahead of the midpoint of the president's term.

"They did it ahead of time, with the wrong question," she told state-run VTV television.

Opposition leader and provincial governor Enrique Mendoza said the statement clearly demonstrated Plaza worked for Chavez and not the state. *AFP*

SCHWARZENEGGER AFP

Judge rejects bid to delay California recall election

LOS ANGELES—Actor Arnold Schwarzenegger and former baseball commissioner Peter Ueberroth, both running for governor of California, laid out economic recovery outlines for the state as a judge rejected an effort to delay the Oct. 7 vote because of potential problems with voting machines.

After days of circus atmosphere around the effort to remove Gov. Gray Davis from office, the campaigns began to take a traditional tone, with major candidates holding carefully staged events to position themselves before voters.

Schwarzenegger, the Austrian-born action star running as a Republican, surrounded himself executive-style with big-name advisers to outline his economic plans. Ueberroth, a Republican who was a key organizer of the successful 1984 Olympics, held a lean, straightforward news conference to offer his proposal.

The recall effort has been fueled by a record $38 billion state budget deficit and voter wrath over California's energy crisis. There are 135 candidates running to replace Davis, a Democrat, if he is voted out of office.

Davis went on the offensive Tuesday with a speech blasting the recall as a Republican power grab. He was to hold a "town hall" meeting in a Hollywood studio Wednesday night.

California's senior US senator, Democrat Dianne Feinstein, campaigned against the recall in a speech in Los Angeles, saying recalls were designed for cases of misconduct and public corruption.

"It was not meant to recall someone you just elected because you don't like a policy or something they've said and done," said Feinstein, who refused to run as a Democratic replacement candidate.

A federal judge in Los Angeles kept the recall on schedule, turning down arguments by American Civil Liberties Union lawyers that it should be delayed until March so that six counties can complete the replacement of old punch-card machines with more reliable modern systems.

The Schwarzenegger and Ueberroth plans were the latest put forth after general criticism of a lack of specifics from candidates. Lt. Gov. Cruz Bustamante, the only major Democrat among the candidates, announced his plan Tuesday.

Schwarzenegger met with advisers including former US Secretary of State George Shultz and billionaire investor Warren Buffett before announcing his ideas during a televised news conference. *AP*

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Rainy season diseases keep health execs' hands full

SAN FERNANDO CITY—The top health official in the Ilocos region denied reports that the dengue fever outbreak has reached epidemic proportions in any part of the Ilocos region.

In a statement, Dr. Eduardo Janairo, Department of Health regional director, said the increase in the number of dengue fever cases was expected due to the rainy season and these cases were "sporadic."

He said the DOH, as of Aug. 15, had recorded 609 dengue cases in the Ilocos, including 13 deaths (or a case fatality rate of 2.14 percent).

The highest number of cases was reported in La Union, with 295. Ilocos Norte has 109 cases; Ilocos Sur, 108; and Pangasinan, 95.

But La Union officials have sounded the alarm bells. As early as Aug. 7, when there were only 142 cases reported in La Union, the provincial board passed a resolution declaring a state of calamity in the province.

The resolution also asked concerned agencies to hasten the delivery of "precautionary and post-epidemic medical measures," especially in the affected areas.

A government source said the resolution was also passed to tap government emergency funds to buy fogging chemicals and equipment.

Janairo said preventive measures, including the fogging of mosquito breeding places and information drives, were being implemented as early as April.

"The (dengue) problem is not the sole responsibility of the Department of Health but also of the community. Environmental sanitation is still the most effective way to prevent and control the disease," Janairo said.

In Pangasinan, health officials have their hands full fighting both dengue and typhoid fever, which are spawned by continuous rains and floods.

Records of the Provincial Health Office showed that dengue fever has killed two girls and afflicted 109 others in 20 towns in the province as of Aug. 15. *Gia Damaso-Dumo and Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Navy exec denies scam in weapons upgrade projects

RANKING officials of the Philippine Navy yesterday denounced reports that Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes stood to gain 30 percent of a P900 million weapons upgrade system of the Navy's Jacinto Class vessels.

In a statement, Vice Admiral Ernesto de Leon, flag officer in command, said the project is above board.

"The project can be reviewed by any interested party being a public document," said De Leon.

"It is a government-to-government transaction between the United Kingdom and the Philippines, carries the United Kingdom government warranty and was passed upon not only by the Department of Justice but also by the National Economic and Development Authority," said De Leon.

SUSPECTS' CONFESSION

Army says Zambo bomb plot foiled

ZAMBOANGA CITY—An alleged new plot to bomb this city was reportedly foiled after the capture of at least two Abu Sayyaf bandits, the military said yesterday.

Southern Command chief Lt. Gen. Roy Kyamko said brothers Asirin and Araham Suhod detailed the Abu plot, which would be carried out in October.

Kyamko said the Suhods, who were acting as Abu Sayyaf theologians, were arrested by elements of the Navy's Special Warfare Group (SAWG) and the Army's special forces in Sanbay Island in Basilan on Aug. 19.

He said the suspects told the military that the plot would involve the planting of at least two bombs in the populated areas of the city.

The bomb plot was uncovered as American soldiers here were busy training their Filipino counterparts on anti-terrorism.

Kyamko said there was no reason for the military to doubt the revelation of the two suspects.

The Abu Sayyaf has been blamed for the series of explosions here over the years.

On Oct. 2, 2002, four people, including an American serviceman, were killed when a bomb exploded near the Southcom headquarters.

Fifteen days later, another bomb exploded at the shopping mall here killing at least 12 people and wounding more than 200 others.

On Oct. 22, another bomb exploded in Fort Pilar, where Christians were gathered in honor of the Our Lady of Fort Pilar.

A Marine soldier died while 11 others were wounded in that attack.

In a report from Cotabato City, Muslim organizations and Islamic authorities have posted a *fatwa* (opinion or verdict) on the Internet that said suicide bombings are a crime against Islam.

The opinions were posted on http://www.thetruereligion.org, a website that specializes in the publication of Shariah (Islamic law) opinion on terrorism. The opinions come from by Ibn Utaymeen and Ibn Baz of the Darul Ifta (House of Opinion) in Mecca, Islam's holiest city.

The latest of the series of opinions on terror attacks was issued after the Jeddah suicide terror attacks in May.

The two Muslim scholars said the governments and the *ulama* (religious leaders) of a particular country are obliged to enforce the *fatwa* and have to work on parallel efforts aimed at "ending this evil."

One specific question to Utaymeen, regarded as "one of the greatest scholars of this century," sent by 17 Muslim groups in Europe and America was: "(A) *fatwa* regarding acts of . . . suicide, such as attaching explosives to a car and storming (targets), whereby he knows without a doubt that he shall die as a result of this action?"

Utaymeen replied that the doer is considered as "one who has killed himself (committed suicide), and as a result he shall be punished in Hell." *Julie Alipala with a report by Nash Maulana, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Army slams NPA for attack on 5 engineers

DAVAO CITY—The military yesterday confirmed the death of at least five Army engineers during an ambush by New People's Army (NPA) rebels on Tuesday in Baganga, Davao Oriental.

Lt. Col. Agane Adriatico, chief of the military's Civil Relations Group for Southeastern Mindanao, however decried the NPA, saying it only proved that the rebel group does not distinguish between combatants and those that were not engaged in combat.

Adriatico said that Army engineers do not participate in combat because their main task was to build infrastructure projects like bridges, roads, and school buildings in areas that government or private engineers won't enter because of peace and order problems.

He said that the ambush is a clear indication that the "communist terrorists will do everything to block the government's development projects."

But Adriatico said the ambush would not deter the engineers from working on various projects for the benefit of civilian communities.

Earlier, Rigoberto Sanchez, spokesperson of the NPA's Merardo Arce Command, said they targeted the Army engineers because they were involved in "combat support operations."

A report from the Army's 30th Special Forces Company based in Mati town said the soldiers were building a road in Barangay Binondo when the communist rebels attacked them.

The provincial government was financing the road project worth P5 million.

The engineers were hauling sand when the dump truck they were riding in hit an anti-personnel land mine, which the NPA rebels had planted along the road.

Two soldiers died instantly. Three other died when the guerrillas fired at the dump truck.

The slain soldiers were identified as MSgt Oscar Andale, Sgt. Vicente Felias, Sgt. Orlando Monton, Pfc. Willie Maulana and Pfc. Bayan Guiamad.

Supt. Catalino Cuy, Davao Oriental police chief, denounced the NPA for "breaking its earlier commitment with the Geneva Convention not to use land mines in its protracted war with the Philippine government."

Last year, NPA rebels in Cateel, using improvised land mines, killed at least 18 government soldiers. *Anthony Allada and Ferdinand Zuasola, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Aklan treasurer seeks justice to return to post

JUSTICE continues to elude a career finance official who has been blocked by Aklan Gov. Florencio Miraflores from re-assuming the post of provincial treasurer for the last eight years.

The Department of Finance on July 25 directed Evan Matimtiman to assume the post but Miraflores asked banks not to recognize Matimtiman as a signatory in the accounts of the provincial government.

Matimtiman's ordeal started when Miraflores filed a case of negligence against him.

In February 2001, the finance department ruled against Matimtiman and suspended him for three months.

After serving his suspension, Matimtiman sought to return to his post but Miraflores blocked it and filed new charges.

Matimtiman was transferred to the regional office of the Bureau of Local Government Finance in Iloilo, prompting him to go protest what he said was demotion before the Civil Service Commission.

The CSC ruled in Matimtiman's favor. The regional office dismissed the charges filed by Miraflores on July 8 leading to the reinstatement order on July 25.

DEFENSE Secretary Angelo Reyes, who heads a task force to oversee mining on Mt. Diwalwal, Environment Secretary Elisea Gozun and Social Welfare Secretary Dinky Soliman visit Diwalwal to inspect preparations for government control of the area.

PHOTO FROM DND

Gov't control of Diwalwal starts to firm up

DAVAO CITY—President Macapagal-Arroyo has appointed Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes as head of a government-controlled firm that would oversee mining on Mt. Diwalwal.

Executive Order No. 217 created the National Task Force Diwalwal (NTFD) composed of Reyes as chair. Environment Secretary Elisea Gozun, Social Welfare Secretary Dinky Soliman, Health Secretary Manuel Dayrit, Labor Secretary Patricia Sto. Tomas, Justice Secretary Simeon Datumanong, Interior Secretary Jose Lina Jr., Press Secretary Milton Alingod and revenue commissioner Guillermo Parayno were named members of the task force.

In a statement, Reyes said the entry of the government into Diwalwal will not displace miners in the area.

The mining operations could be run by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources or by a qualified contractor.

Under the plan, soldiers would teach at the Diwalwal Elementary School while the education department has not assigned teachers yet.

Military doctors will provide medical services while members of the Army's engineering brigade will help maintain roads and other infrastructure in the area.

Miners said government control of the area proved to be beneficial than they have earlier thought.

Franco Tito, chair of Barangay Diwata, said the NTFD brought them peace.

"I did not think government is good," Tito told a crowd of more than 5,000 during a visit by Reyes, Soliman and Gozun.

Tito's group had vigorously opposed the creation of the task force in the past, saying it would kill small-scale mining in Diwata.

His group, mostly small-scale miners, had barricaded the Davao-Agusan national highway last year to dramatize their protest.

Reyes said the government's purpose was to improve the lives of the miners, majority of them living marginalized lives despite the gold, by providing them with basic services.

He said a military special force led by Lt. Col. Maximo Caro was also put in place to ensure the area's peace and order. The soldiers are needed, Reyes said, as a defense against the New People's Army and several interest groups that include policemen and military personnel.

"The military and police should not engage in mining business here. They are here to serve the people," said Reyes.

Gozun said when the miners entered a service contract with the government since NTFD's creation a year ago, "it changed their status from illegal to legal."

The militant group Bayan Muna said the entry of the NTFD "would only aggravate the conflict in Diwalwal due to the intensifying militarization in the area and the grave abuses that have been committed as a result of the excessive deployment of troopers both from the AFP and PNP."

Meanwhile, Gozun said they were also working on other plans to further improve the mining operation "to prevent further degradation of the environment due to unabated use of toxic chemicals and materials."

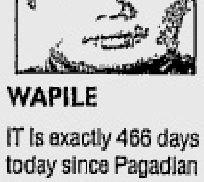
Soliman handed funds to initiate livelihood programs for the residents.

"You are living in a gold-rush area, but majority of you live in poor condition," Soliman said during her visit to the area along with Reyes and Gozun.

The Bureau of Mines and Geosciences said the legalization of mining operations in Diwata was also becoming beneficial to the government.

"For the first time in 20 years, the government has managed to rake in some P17 million worth of revenues," Constancio Paye, Mines and Geosciences Bureau director for Southern Mindanao, said. *Dennis Jay Santos, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Countdown for Justice



WAPILE

IT is exactly 466 days today since Pagadian journalist Edgar Damalerio was slain in cold blood. The principal suspect, police officer Guillermo Wapile, remains at large after escaping while in the custody of the police.

Scion of Angeles clan held for kidnap, rape

ANGELES CITY—Policemen arrested a scion of a prominent family in the city for allegedly kidnapping and raping a 14-year-old student on Aug. 15.

Assistant City Prosecutor Angelito Valderama recommended the detention without bail of Roberto Ponce Jr., 24, who was charged with kidnap for ransom and rape before the regional trial court here.

Supt. Jimmy Restua, city police chief, said Ponce abducted the girl near the city health office in Barangay Balibago at around 4:30 p.m. last Friday.

In a sworn statement, the girl said she came from school and was on her way home when Ponce offered her a ride. Because it was raining, the girl said she accepted Ponce's offer and got into the suspect's car.

She said the suspect, however, did not drop her home and instead continued driving. She said the suspect pretended that he still wanted to talk to her.

She added that Ponce also made her believe that he was asking her help to settle a misunderstanding with the suspect's supposed girlfriend.

But the girl claimed that when they reached Barangay Cutcut, Ponce started molesting her and forced her to touch his sex organ.

Later, she said the suspect went to an area near the Holy Rosary Church here to get a P20,000 ransom that he earlier demanded from the girl's mother.

The girl said Ponce again molested her and then allowed her to go home.

A medico-legal report confirmed that the girl suffered sexual attack.

Renato Bautista Jr., Ponce's lawyer, said his client could have not committed the crime because he was in the City of San Fernando for three days with his wife when the supposed crime was committed.

Bautista also said Ponce was arrested illegally because the police did not have any warrant of arrest.

The victim's mother said in a sworn statement that the suspect informed her through a cellular phone call that he was holding her daughter.

She said the suspect initially demanded P50,000 for the release of her daughter but later settled for a P20,000 ransom. She said the suspect repeatedly told her not to report the incident to the police.

The mother, however, ignored the suspect's warning and sought the help of police. *Jun Malig, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

Coup talk sends peso to 31-month low

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from importers would keep the peso under pressure.

Camacho said lingering political and economic concerns after the July 27 military mutiny were also weighing on the peso, with investors hedging dollars on worries the local currency would decline further.

Worst performing in region

The finance secretary said a recent Court of Appeals' order suspending Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Governor Rafael Buenaventura and four other BSP officials over the closure of Urban Bank, and "noises on the political front" were giving investors the jitters.

While other Asian currencies are holding up against the dollar amid signs of US economic recovery, the peso has become the region's worst-performing currency after falling by as much as 6 percent from its high in May.

"The irony is that it (peso) should benefit from the US recovery given its export profile, but obviously the odd thing out here is the politics," said Claudio Piron, strategist at Standard Chartered in Singapore.

"Talk of yet another coup is surfacing. Actually, it has been there since the week after the (failed) coup," Reuters quoted a Manila-based trader at a foreign bank as saying.

"Now it is surfacing again because it is going to be a long weekend and given today is the 20th anniversary of the death of Benigno Aquino," the trader added. The country's financial market will be closed today for a holiday.

The peso's fall prompted security and military officials to play down talk of another coup attempt against President Macapagal-Arroyo whose husband has come under fire for alleged money laundering.

National Security Adviser Roilo Golez said that except for a few, all 356 participants in the July 27 mutiny had been accounted for. No other group, he added, is capable of mounting a similar uprising.

"Absolutely, there's no reason for the public to worry about another coup," he said in a phone interview, stressing that he himself had not gotten wind of any such rumor the past few days.

Lt. Gen. Rodolfo Garcia, Armed Forces' vice chief of staff, echoed Golez's view, saying "the mutineers have been exposed for what they are and they (don't) have any capability to get any more adherents to their cause."

"No right-thinking military official should be involved in a similar activity," Garcia said in a phone interview, adding the public should put any worry about any coup "behind us."

Golez and Garcia said the military was focusing on the pre-trial investigation of the suspected mutineers, preparatory to the convening of a general court-martial.

Junior officers staged a 22-hour mutiny late last month, accusing the government and senior military officers of graft, selling arms to insurgents, organizing bomb attacks and planning to impose martial law.

Maneuvering

"There is a lot of maneuvering politically by those who want to destabilize the government and the government, of course, tries to defend itself by bringing out the bad skeleton of these people," the Manila-based trader said.

Opposition Sen. Panfilo Lacson, who plans to run in the 2004 presidential election, on Monday accused President Macapagal-Arroyo's husband of salting away P270 million in bank accounts under false names. First Gentleman Arroyo described the allegations as a "fairy tale."

Dealers said people were disturbed by the opposition's new charges of corruption.

The peso started to slump after the July 14 escape of Indonesian terrorist Fathur Roman al-Ghozi from Camp Crame, sparking talk of fresh terrorist attacks in the region.

"The air of pessimism still exists despite the good economic fundamentals," a commercial bank dealer said.

Lower budget deficit

In Malacañang, presidential spokesperson Ignacio Bunye expressed hope the local currency would strengthen starting in September when millions of overseas Filipino workers send more dollars to their families here for the Christmas holidays.

Bunye remarked that about $8 billion was usually remitted from abroad from September until December.

"If we have many in-flows of dollars, the tendency will be to drive down the peso-dollar exchange rate," he said.

Bunye said the government's improving financial condition also augured well for the foreign exchange rate.

He said the lower-than-expected budget deficit of P95.4 billion, which is 20.1 percent lower than the P119 billion targeted for the period, showed a marked improvement in tax collection by the Bureau of Internal Revenue and Bureau of Customs.

BSP Deputy Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. said the central bank was ready to provide liquidity in case of sharp fluctuations in the forex rate.

"Sound macroeconomic fundamentals are being swamped by noise caused by noneconomic factors. We hope the decibel level of the noise is reduced so that the economy would again be the focus of the market," Tetangco said.

If investors would only look at the benign inflation, low interest rates and declining budget deficit, then the peso should improve or at least stay flat, added Wick Veloso, deputy treasurer of HSBC.

"But at the end of the day, it is the perception of the market (regarding) political uncertainties that drives the peso's direction," Veloso added. *Reports from TJ Burgonio, Gil C. Cabacungan Jr., AP, AFP and Reuters*

Lifestyle checkers widen hunt for gov't millionaires

From page A1

vestigators were working to secure affidavits from contractors, suppliers of construction materials, brokers and importers to make graft charges stick on officials of the BOC, BIR and Department of Public Works and Highways who had flunked the lifestyle check.

Even the Presidential Anti-Graft Commission is moving.

CBCP to help

PAGC member Teresita Baltazar said they had tapped the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines' Commission on Social Action, Justice and Peace to help pinpoint grafters in the government and to provide the documents needed to pin them down.

"The success of the lifestyle check program rests on our vast network of informants," Baltazar said.

But the net worth of officials in "graft-prone" departments look like peanuts compared to that of Cabinet officials.

Cabinet millionaires club

President Macapagal-Arroyo's Cabinet is a certified millionaires' club, with the wealthiest having assets of P558.2 million and the "poorest" still richer than many public servants by P2 million.

Based on the Statements of Assets and Liabilities filed as of Dec. 31, 2002, by 37 Cabinet officials, Agriculture Secretary Luis Lorenzo Jr. is the wealthiest of the bunch, with a net worth of P519.6 million. His assets amount to P558.6 million and his liabilities, P38.5 million.

Finance Secretary Camacho ranks second, with P328.9 million net worth (assets minus liabilities). He has P336.6 million in assets and P7.7 million in liabilities.

Third is Metro Manila Development Authority chair Bayani Fernando, a longtime mayor. He has a net worth of P178.5 million and no liabilities.

Energy Secretary Vince Perez Jr. comes fourth, with a net worth of P128.3 million, out of P131.3 million in assets and P3 million in liabilities.

Trade Secretary Manuel Roxas, scion of the powerful Roxas-Araneta clan, is fifth with a net worth of P76.8 million. The bachelor ex-congressman has P105.7 million in assets and P28.8 million in liabilities.

The President comes only next to Roxas, with a declared net worth of P72 million. She listed P75.5 million in assets and P3.5 million in liabilities.

The PAGC is the agency in charge of conducting lifestyle checks on Cabinet officials.

Most corrupt

Camacho said the DOF was seriously fighting corruption among its ranks, particularly in the BIR and BOC.

The two bureaus, which collect more than 90 percent of the government's annual revenues, topped a Social Weather Stations survey of businessmen on the most corrupt government institutions.

The government estimates that about P100 billion in tax and tariff collections is lost yearly to corruption.

SALs don't mean anything

But Camacho said the public should not jump to conclusions because by themselves, the SALs did not mean anything yet.

"Their net worth may be justifiable so we should not be harsh in our judgment. Thorough investigation has to be made before we can conclude," he said, citing the efforts expended by the DOF internal affairs unit before filing graft charges against three BIR and one BOC officials last month.

Camacho said the efforts of the DOF and the Transparency Group were coordinated in that the latter was conducting a lifestyle check on all government agencies while the former was focusing on the BIR and BOC.

Institutionalize

To strengthen the mandate of the DOF internal affairs unit called the Central Management Information Office (CMIO), Camacho said he had asked Malacañang to issue an executive order that would form the Revenue Integrity and Protection Service.

"The EO will institutionalize the lifestyle checks and can be used as a template for other institutions ... An EO will also make the initiative more permanent and would focus on preventing corruption," he said.

He said such an order would also provide the CMIO a budget of about P10 million, if approved.

Camacho also said the DOF would solicit grants and technical assistance from multilateral agencies to fund the ongoing drive to stamp out corruption, particularly in revenue-collecting agencies.

'The people are angry'

The PAGC's Baltazar said another group actively supplying information on grafters in the government was the Transparency and Accountability Network, an alliance of 19 organizations

"What we have going for us is the fact that people are now angry at the prevalence of graft," she told the INQUIRER.

Conti, a 29-year-old lawyer, said a new set of officials from the DPWH and BOC would be charged with graft two weeks from now.

He also said they had given all five DPWH and BOC officials charged with graft Wednesday the chance to explain their alleged ill-gotten wealth before the Transparency Group during the "investigation phase."

Conti was reacting to the complaint of Public Works Undersecretary Salvador Pleyto that he was not given the opportunity to refute the graft accusation before it was presented to the press and filed before the Office of the Ombudsman.

"This comes as a total surprise to me," Pleyto had said.

The others charged were Public Works Regional Director Romeo Panganiban and BOC officials Gil A. Valera, Jaime P. Maglipon and Flor Aguilar.

Earlier, the Transparency Group said it had an "airtight" case against five BOC and DPWH officials charged.

The evidence against the five officials consists of their SALs, service records, land titles, business permits and photographs of their houses and other assets.

The witnesses against them are mostly composed of the police investigators and personnel from city and municipal assessors offices, the Land Transportation Office and the Bureau of Immigration.

Good deterrent

The President is backing the lifestyle checks being conducted by the Transparency Group, which has found that more than 80 percent of officials of the BOC, BIR, and DPWH are millionaires.

"Lifestyle checks backed by due process are a good deterrent to corruption," she said. She has earlier declared that she and her family were also open to such an examination in the wake of Lacson's accusation that her husband had amassed P270 million from campaign contributions.

Simple living

Ms Macapagal said her administration was committed to the idea that honest service should go hand in hand with a dignified lifestyle.

"The majority of dedicated public servants are shamed by the profligacy and extravagance of their co-workers," she said. "Let us have an ethic of simple living in government. If one's family can't stand a life of relative sacrifice and frugality, he or she must leave the service."

Death threats

Conti said he had been receiving "disturbing messages" by text and phone, including one that said: "Stop [what you're doing] or you will stop [breathing]."

"But I'm not really bothered by them," he said. "I consider it an honor to be doing this work. I'm not afraid because I know I'm doing the right thing."

He defended his assessment that more than 80 percent of officials of the BOC, BIR and DPWH were millionaires. "They are the ones who made the declaration [of their assets]. So they should be prepared to explain them," he said.

Conti stressed that the listing of millionaires did not mean the automatic filing of graft charges against them. He said those who could not justify their assets would be the ones to be charged in court.

He said, however, that his group had no "jurisdiction" over the President's husband.

Other Cabinet millionaires

CHIEF presidential legal counsel Avelino Cruz Jr. declared a net worth of P71.8M, out of P103.1M in assets and P31.2M in liabilities.

Rounding up the Top 10 are Presidential Adviser on Media and Religious Affairs Conrado Limcaoco (net worth of P42.1M out of P53.1M in assets and P11M in liabilities), National Security Adviser Roilo Golez (P38.7M net worth, P39.5M in assets and P700,000 in liabilities), Environment Secretary Elisea Gozun (net worth of P35M, P40.7M in assets and P5.6M in liabilities), and Senior Deputy Executive Secretary Waldo Flores (P32.3M net worth, with P33.6M in assets and P1.3M liabilities.

The rest of the list:

11. Agrarian Reform Secretary Roberto Pagdanganan, P24.2M net worth (P31.8M in assets, P7.6M in liabilities).
12. Tourism Secretary Richard Gordon, P22.3M net worth (P45M in assets, P23M in liabilities).
13. Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process Eduardo Ermita, P21.9M net worth, P30.8M in assets and P8.9M in liabilities.
14. Presidential spokesperson Ignacio Bunye, P14.8M net worth, no liabilities.
15. Presidential Liaison on Political Affairs Jose Ma. Rufino, P13.7M net worth, P21.2M in assets and P7.5M in liabilities.
16. Education Secretary Edilberto de Jesus, P12.9M net worth, no liabilities.
17. Labor Secretary Patricia Sto. Tomas, P11.2M net worth, P17.3M in assets and P6M in liabilities.
18. Health Secretary Manuel Dayrit, P10.4M net worth, P10.7M in assets and P286,000 in liabilities.
19. Presidential Political Adviser Hernani Braganza, P9.4M net worth, no liabilities.
20. Executive Secretary Alberto Romulo, P8.2M net worth, P10.1M in assets and P1.8M in liabilities.
21. Justice Secretary Simeon Datumanong, P7.5M net worth, no liablities.
22. Presidential Management Staff chief Silvestre Afable III, P7.1M net worth, no liabilities.
23. Foreign Secretary Blas Ople, P7.1M net worth, P24.6M in assets and P17.5M in liabilities.
24. Social Welfare Secretary Corazon Soliman, P5.4M net worth, P5.8M in assets and P370,000 in liabilities.
25. Presidential Adviser for Special Concerns Norberto Gonzales, P5.2M net worth, P15M in assets and P9.8M in liabilities.
26. Presidential Chief of Staff Rigoberto Tiglao, P4.9M net worth, no liabilities.
27. Defense Secretary Aneglo Reyes, P4.8M net worth, P7.8M in assets and P3M in liabilities.
28. Transportation Secretary Leandro Mendoza, P4M net worth, P28M in assets and P23.9M in liabilities.
29. National Economic Development Authority Chair Romulo Neri, P3.8M, no liabilities.
30. Science Secretary Estrella Alabastro, P3.7M net worth, P4M in assets and P344,000 in liabilities.
31. Presidential Legislative Adviser Gabriel Claudio, P3.6M net worth, no liabilities.
32. Housing and Urban development Council chair Michael Defensor, P3.2M net worth, P9.8M in assets and P6.6M in liabilities.
33. Secretary Joaquin Lagonera, Office of the President, P3M net worth, P4.2M assets and P1.1M liabilities.
34. National Anti-Poverty Commission chair Teresita Quintos-Deles, P2.9M net worth, P3M in assets and P110,000 in liabilities.
35. Budget Secretary Emilia Boncodin, P2.1M net worth, PP2.9M in assets and P820,000 in liabilities.
36. Public Works Secretary Florante Soriquez, P1.5M net worth, P4.5M in assets and P2.9M in liabilities.
37. Interior Secretary Jose Lina, P1.3M net worth, P2M in assets and P650,000 in liabilities.

Operative says JI is in RP 'to unite armed Muslims'

From page A1

he hired a local to shoot the video in July in an Abu Sayyaf camp in Sulu.

Mahmud said he belonged to the Rabitatul Mujahidin, supposedly the JI's armed wing.

"Our intention is to establish an Islamic country in Southeast Asia," he said. "As to how we will achieve it, we have our plans, but we are not going to divulge them."

He said that the JI was determined to achieve this goal, and that the unification of Muslim armed groups in the Philippines would help the group do it.

"If you ask what kind of firepower we have, ours can make you deaf and blind," Mahmud said.

He said JI operatives were unfazed by "the arrest and death of our martyrs," and added: "Allah is great, Allah is great, Allah is great."

Believed authentic

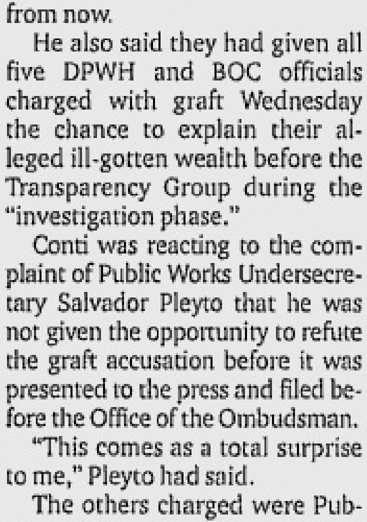
Asked whether he thought Mahmud's claim was authentic, ABC correspondent Williams said: "I believe it to be so."

Williams told the INQUIRER that he had lent his camera to the Sulu local whom he hired to shoot the video.

"The JI indicated that they wanted to issue this statement as evidence that they are still around. But ... given the nature of the threat to westerners from both the Abu Sayyaf and the JI, I was directly warned I could not go there myself to obtain the statement or ask questions," he said.

Williams said he sent his questions and a camera to the JI operatives through "an independent source."

"They decided to issue a prepared statement in Arabic, which answered some of those questions," he said. "It is not ideal, and I am relying on an element of trust. But this is how it is being represented to me, and I have done everything I can to be as sure as I can that this is genuine."



UNDATED photo of regional Jemaah Islamiyah head Hambali who has at least 300 troops trained in the Philippines and Afghanistan.

The JI is blamed for the series of bombings in Indonesia, including the deadly explosions in Bali in October last year.

An Indonesian court recently sentenced to death Amrozi bin Nurhasyim, dubbed the "smiling bomber," in connection with the Bali attacks.

'Not true'

The Philippine military earlier said the JI had linked up not only with the Abu Sayyaf but also with the secessionist Moro Islamic Liberation Front.

Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes said the confessions of arrested JI operatives, including the fugitive Fathur Rohman al-Ghozi, that they had trained in MILF camps were sufficient to prove this link.

But MILF chair Murad Ebrahim denied this.

"That is not true," he said. "We have never trained in our camps [anyone other than the] Bangsamoro people. We never accept in the ranks of our forces other nationals. This propaganda is only being invented by the Philippine government, especially the Armed Forces, in order to gain more support [from the] United States and allies like Australia."

According to Murad, the allegation that the Mindanao rebellion is tied to international terrorism is aimed at convincing the United States and other countries to fund the Philippine government's anti-terror drive.

But while he denied that foreigners had ever been trained by the MILF, Murad admitted that some foreigners had visited its camps, including Camp Abubakar in Maguindanao.

"The truth is that before the all-out war of [President Joseph] Estrada, there have been visitors coming to Camp Abubakar. But they were not going there for training. They were just visitors," Murad said.

He said that at the time, the MILF opened its doors to any visitor without distinguishing whether they were from the Jemaah Islamiyah or any other group.

He pointed out that until after the 9/11 attacks in the United States in 2001, "nobody knew who was Jemaah [or] al-Qaida."

Murad conceded that some of those who visited MILF camps could be members of international terrorist groups.

"But as far as training is concerned, we never trained them or any other foreign nationals," he said.

Swiss lawyer claims $683-M Marcos loot

From page A1

Court said the Marcoses had initially deposited the funds in Swiss banks through the five foundations.

The tribunal said the Marcoses, not the foundations, owned the Swiss accounts, citing Imelda Marcos' statement to the Sandiganbayan on May 26, 1998 that she was the sole beneficiary of 90 percent of the funds in escrow.

"The admission of respondent Imelda Marcos only confirmed what was already generally known: that the foundations were established precisely to hide the money stolen by the Marcos spouses from the petitioner Republic. It negated whatever illusion there was, if any, that the foreign foundations owned even a nominal part of the assets in question," the Supreme Court said.

The high court said the funds, now in an escrow account of the Philippine National Bank, were ill-gotten because the lawful salaries of Ferdinand and Imelda Marcos from the time they took power in 1966 up to the time they were ousted in 1986 amounted to only $304,372.

PATRICK FOETISCH: Yet another claimant to the Marcos loot claiming the money belongs to the "entities" he represents.

JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

On Aug. 5, Swiss authorities approved the handing over to the Philippine government of the $683 million (about P38 billion) that the Marcoses had stashed in Swiss banks. But the Swiss authorities said the money could not be touched unless the victims of human rights abuses by the Marcos regime were indemnified.

A total of 9,539 Marcos victims, who filed a class suit against the Marcoses in 1986, were awarded $1.9 billion by the US District Court of Hawaii in 1994. The ruling has yet to be enforced.

Unidentified beneficiaries

As board director of the five foundations, Foetish said it was his right to protect the interest of the people behind the foundations, whom he refused to identify.

"I read in an article that the Marcos family moved to block government efforts to get hold of the $683-million Swiss accounts at the PNB. That's funny because the Marcoses cannot do that since it's not their problem. They're not part of the foundation," Foetish said in an interview at the Business Center of the Makati Shangri-La hotel.

The Marcoses filed a motion asking the Supreme Court to reconsider its July 15 ruling, claiming their rights had been violated. They are calling for a trial.

Asked why the Marcoses filed a motion for reconsideration if they had no connection to the foundations, Foetish said, "they have the right to protect their honor, and we have nothing to do with their legal effort."

The Swiss lawyer said that the rendering of judgment based on a trial was something that was "promised by the Philippine authorities" before the accounts were transferred from Switzerland to the Philippines.

"The main question here is the special contract or agreement (between the PNB and the Swiss government). It is very clear in that agreement that judgment should be rendered first," the Swiss lawyer said.

Foetish said Swiss authorities had not declared the accounts "ill-gotten." Offering to translate documents from the Swiss Department of Justice and the police, he said: "You have to understand the Swiss Court and the Swiss authorities."

Court trial needed

He said the Swiss Federal Court merely upheld the right of Philippine authorities to forfeit or redistribute the assets on the condition that decisions were reached during a trial.

"As far as the entities are concerned, the Supreme Court decision is not final and executory," Foetish said.

But the Office of the Solicitor General insisted that the Supreme Court decision must be executed without further delay, citing historical and political implications as well as public interest.

President Macapagal-Arroyo earlier declared that she was supporting the allocation of P8 billion of the P38 billion for the victims of human rights abuses under the Marcos regime.

The amount is smaller than the P10 billion that House Bill No. 4535 and Senate Bill No. 1877 seek to set aside for the victims of the Marcos regime.

The two measures seek to amend the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Law, which requires that all ill-gotten wealth of the Marcoses and their cronies that the Presidential Commission on Good Government recovers should go to fund the land reform program.

HB 4335 is facing rough sailing in the House. Some legislators and a group of rights victims, represented by the Samahan ng mga Ex-Detainees Laban sa Detensyon at Para sa Amnestiya (Selda), are opposed to proposals to include victims of human rights abuses in post-Marcos administrations in the compensation bill.

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DEALERS WELCOME!

Battle heats up under the sheets

From page A1

"weekender"—could be here.

Drug giant Pfizer's Viagra diamond-shaped anti-impotency pill, also known as the blue bomber, must now stand up against the orange-colored tablets of Levitra in the lucrative US market.

Levitra, the drug devised by Bayer Corp. of Germany and Britain's GlaxoSmitmKline, won approval from the Food and Drug Administration on Tuesday to go on sale in the United States. The drug is already sold across Europe.

And a third entrant in the massive market to treat "erectile dysfunction," the yellow Cialis pill from Lilly Icos, is hoping to get approval later this year.

Cialis is known as the "weekender" because its effects are supposed to last up to 36 hours.

All three pills work in the same way, by blocking an enzyme called phosphodiesterase-5, thus relaxing muscles in the penis, allowing increased blood flow into it and producing an erection.

But they each claim different levels of performance.

Works quickly

"In clinical trials, Levitra was shown to work quickly," Myron Murdock, a Levitra investigator, said in a Levitra press release.

"More importantly, Levitra was shown to improve the sexual response for the majority of men the first time they took it, and it worked consistently over time."

In US government tests involving 2,000 men, it was found that Levitra improved the all-round ability of men to achieve and maintain an erection.

It is recommended that Levitra users take a 10 milligram dose one hour before engaging in sexual activity, although a more potent dose is available for men requiring more of a kick.

Side effects

Even so, doctors warn Levitra and Viagra can have side-effects, especially for men with a heart condition. Otherwise healthy men could experience headaches, a runny nose and indigestion.

The German-British partnership hopes to have Levitra available in US pharmacies in weeks. Bayer will manufacture Levitra, while GlaxoSmitmKline will market it in the United States

Investors appeared to be getting a little nervous about the performance of Viagra, which has raked in about $2 billion since hitting the market in 1998. Pfizer's shares dropped 53 cents or 1.69 percent, to $30.74 on Wednesday.

The battleground has extended from the bedroom to the courts, with Pfizer filing suit against Bayer and GlaxoSmitmKline, saying one of its patents was being infringed upon.

Analysts say the stakes are high.

A study released this month by market research group Kalorama Information said Levitra, Cialis and similar remedies would spark a 25-percent annual growth in the global male health market, already estimated to be worth $17 billion.

GlaxoSmitmKline estimates some 152 million men world-wide are affected by erectile dysfunction and it hopes the orange pill will find wide favor in the United States.

Brand bashing

According to market studies, some 30 million American males are affected by erectile dysfunction. Despite experiencing sexual problems, however, nine out of 10 men in the United States have not yet sought treatment from a doctor, according to GlaxoSmitmKline.

"We anticipate a flurry of brand bashing in the next few months as these two new products gear up to hit the US market and Viagra fights to hold its marketing position," said Kalorama Information acquisitions editor Steven Heffner.

"By 2008, we see at least four companies splitting up the market pie that Pfizer currently has all to itself." *AFP*

Lacson to ask Paris to investigate Mike A

From page A1

Macapagal-Arroyo could be frozen.

Lacson said that despite his request, the AMLC has not taken steps to freeze the bank accounts, including those of Jose Pidal who the senator claimed was the assumed name of the First Gentleman.

"I plan to write the FATF to compel the AMLC to act on this," the senator said in an interview. The FATF is the international watchdog against money laundering.

CA order needed

AMLC Executive Director Vicente Aquino said on Tuesday that the council could not freeze any suspicious accounts without an order from the Court of Appeals. The council was stripped of its authority to freeze suspicious accounts after Congress amended the Anti-Money Laundering Act in March.

The AMLC said it would ask Lacson to furnish it with a copy of his report against Arroyo, including supporting documents, so that it could study whether to investigate the First Gentleman.

But Lacson said that under the Anti-Money Laundering Act, the AMLC could conduct an investigation on its own and freeze bank accounts deemed to be suspicious.

Prejudging

Lacson was equally disappointed with the Department of Justice and the Office of the Ombudsman after he heard some officials say that his allegations against Arroyo would not stand up in court.

"This only reinforces the belief of my informants when they first came to me that nothing will happen to their cases if they go to court," the senator said.

In a statement, Lacson chided Justice Undersecretary Jose Calida and Ombudsman Special Prosecutor Dennis Villa-Ignacio for issuing statements that "prejudge" the allegations he had raised against Arroyo.

LACSON

ARROYO

The senator said the job of Calida and Villa-Ignacio "is to closely examine and objectively evaluate the evidence presented before issuing a statement or conclusion."

"They are the ones politicking since the person who they prematurely cleared of money laundering is the husband of the President, who appointed them," Lacson said.

In another statement, Lacson belied the claim of Arroyo that his allegations were politically motivated.

"This is not about Senator Lacson against the President and the First Gentleman," he said. "This is about the fight against corruption by those who are in government, those who use government resources to violate our laws and make a mockery of our democratic system."

Lacson admitted that the Bank of the Philippine Islands branch on Perea Street in Makati where, he said, Pidal had opened an account was indeed closed. But he said Pidal's account was transferred to the BPI main office at the corner of Ayala Avenue and Paseo de Roxas.

Lacson said the bank statement dated July 30 this year that he got had come from the BPI main office in Makati.

The senator also denied claims by the lawyer of Victoria and Thomas Toh—two persons he claimed had helped Arroyo launder money—that his sister who works at the Union Bank branch in Cavite, had helped him on the Union Bank accounts of the Tohs.

"She's not my informant and I will not involve any member of my family in this," Lacson said.

In Malacañang, Vice Gov. Juan Miguel "Mikey" Arroyo urged Lacson to file a case against his father instead of "hiding" behind his parliamentary immunity.

"The senator (Lacson) should charge my dad in court so my dad could defend himself," the younger Arroyo said in a telephone interview from the Palace.

The vice governor said Lacson was engaged in politicking when he besmirched "my father's reputation."

The young Arroyo said his father, whom he visited on Wednesday, was "OK *naman*" and was "not affected" by the issue.

He said the issue did not create tension between his parents. "My father is a lawyer and my *nanay* (mother) believes he can defend himself well." *With a report from Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

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AN ADDENDUM
TO THE OPEN LETTER
TO THE PRESIDENT OF
THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
PUBLISHED YESTERDAY, AUGUST 21, 2003.

If the reason for holding on the PN golf course is to provide a facility for its 200 or so military golfers to play golf, we say, without the PN golf course these military golfers can always avail themselves of the facilities of the nearby Villamor golf course and the Army's Kagitingan golf course also in Fort Bonifacio, not to mention the Camp Aguinaldo golf course.

The above legal contention notwithstanding, VAdm Pio P. Carranza, then PN chief, recommended in 1995 to SND the turnover of the PN golf course area to the lot owners/awardees, but the recommendation was not favorably acted upon. Later, in 1998, VAdm Eduardo Ma R. Santos, then PN chief, recognized the rights of the lot owners/awardees and was willing and ready to turn over the area to them if directed or authorized by the courts or higher authorities. Because of the legal question cited above, then DND Sec. Orlando Mercado told the AFP Officers Village Association, Inc. (AFPOVAI), which was following up the requested DND directive, to go to court.

For affected lot owners filed a case in the Pasig RTC for the eviction of the PN Golf Club from their respective lots inside the PN golf course area. The case is still pending. Meanwhile, Sec. Heherson T. Alvarez, then DENR secretary, wrote DND Sec. Angelo T. Reyes stating that subject parcel of land belongs to the lot owners/awardees, with an appeal for him to turn over said area to them as soon as possible. But the OSND, in a letter to AFPOVAI recently, cited the legal issue and the pendency of the case in court as now the reason for its not being able to act on our request, claiming it is sub judice. The claim holds true only to the four complainants, the legal advantage not withstanding in the interest of the 654 members, the complainants are willing to withdraw the case, provided that a directive is issued by the SND or the President for the PN to vacate the contested area and turn over the same to the lot owners/awardees.

AFPOVAI 678 Chapter
Names Listed in
August 21, 2003 issue
Section A page 11

ADVT.

MOVING FORWARD

20 years after its birth with the death of Ninoy Aquino, the spirit of People Power lives on. It lives in the hearts and minds of Filipinos doing extraordinary things. Citizens who have stopped complaining about how bad things are, and instead are taking steps to improve their lot.

These are the People Power People. They remember the glory days, but they also moved forward, living and breathing the values that light the path of heroes: sacrifice, service, responsibility, empowerment, and transformation.

If enough of us emulate their shining example, we can finally realize the dream of building a truly just and prosperous society.

Let us commemorate the 20th year of the Aquino assassination by being a part of the solution. Let us be counted among the People Power People.

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Yellow confetti back in Makati

From page A1

where the ex-senator lies buried.

In the Makati City ceremony, three presidents—all wearing yellow, the color of the Aquino-inspired anti-Marcos opposition—lay wreaths at the foot of the Ninoy monument at the corner of Ayala Avenue and Paseo de Roxas. As many as 8,000 people joined the rites in Makati.

Aquino's death galvanized the opposition in 1983, and led directly to the People Power phenomenon, which deposed the dictator Ferdinand Marcos in 1986.

Disappointed

In remarks made the other day, however, Aquino's widow, former President Corazon Aquino, said she was disappointed that people power had not yet lifted Filipinos from poverty.

"But 1986 was only the beginning of our deliverance—from want, injustice and inequality," she said. "However, unless 'people power' has been needed to counteract coups, shame some ambitious politicians or remove an erring president, we have not seen enough of it where it should count: in improving the lives of Filipinos who are poor."

"People power" rose again in January 2001, when President Joseph Estrada was forced to step down amid massive anti-corruption protests.

Aquino noted that nationalist fervor rises quickly in political crisis, but "ebbs just as fast" when things return to normal.

In a bid to turn things around, Aquino on Wednesday launched the "People Power People Movement" to honor 20 organizations as models of quiet, hard work in poor communities—helping the disabled, aiding abused women and children, offering medical care and protecting the environment.

"If enough of us stopped complaining about how bad things are and did something ... then we could—together—inspire and uplift, teach and transform society," she said.

Wreath-laying

The wreath-laying ceremony at the Ninoy Aquino monument began at 2:45 p.m. with the arrival of former Presidents Aquino and Fidel V. Ramos and President Macapagal Arroyo.

They were joined by thousands of marchers from PDP-Laban, August Twenty-One Movement (ATOM), and various people's organizations and civic groups.

With band music playing in the background, Aquino, wearing a golden yellow dress, was first to march toward the monument. Two men carried her wreath of yellow flowers ahead of her while she walked.

Ramos, wearing a yellow Ninoy Aquino T-shirt over a black polo shirt, followed shortly. Two men also carried his wreath.

Ms Macapagal came last. Like Ramos, she was wearing a bright yellow T-shirt. She lay a wreath of white orchids at the monument.

After the three Presidents reached the monument, a 21-gun salute followed.

The Presidents then marched back together after a few minutes.

As the protest song "Bayan Ko" was sung, Aquino made the famous L-for-Laban sign with her hand. The other government officials also made the sign as they sang.

Yellow confetti continued to cascade from the buildings and a helicopter passed by to drop thousands of rose petals.

The whole ceremony took about 10 minutes.

Makati City police chief Senior Supt. Jovito Gutierrez said the crowd estimate was 8,000.

At the Ninoy Aquino International Airport, the late senator's sister and brother, Sen. Teresa Aquino Oreta and Rep. Agapito Aquino (LDP, Makati City), attended a morning Mass held right at the Bay 11 tarmac, where the assassination had taken place.

They were joined by about a hundred yellow-clad members of the August Twenty One Movement and the Ninoy Aquino Movement, and airport officials and employees.

Representative Aquino, in a brief speech after the Mass, called on Filipinos to work for the good of the Philippines.

3 lessons

"If all of us love our country, there is no big sacrifice that we would refuse to do," he added.

The congressman also related three lessons in life which he said he learned from his brother: Do not be demoralized, persevere and work for spiritual conversion.

"The third was the only one he did not boast nor talk about so I believed that he really did it," he said.

"This is the most important key to his success. If we focus on God in everyday of our lives, we would not err in our decisions."

Later in the day, the congressman said he believed the masterminds behind his brother's killing were already dead.

"We still want to know who the mastermind in the killing of Ninoy was. But sometimes we suspect that our main suspects have already passed away."

His brother said all decisions related to Aquino while he was jailed had to be cleared by Marcos personally, whether it was a one-day pass or allowing him to read newspapers.

"And that's the reason why some project like this to get rid of Ninoy couldn't have been implemented without the knowledge and approval of Ferdinand Marcos himself."

In Manila, as the sun was setting, Roxas Boulevard turned yellow.

As the new Ninoy Aquino statue was unveiled at Baywalk, yellow flags waved, balloons and confetti flew, and thousands of people, mostly clad in yellow, cheered.

"When you go here, stand beside Ninoy, so you would remember his heroism," said former President Aquino.

Members of the Aquino family, among them Tarlac Rep. Benigno "Noynoy" Aquino III and Makati's Butz Aquino, were among the first to have their photo taken beside the statue.

President Macapagal-Arroyo, Senate President Franklin Drilon, ex-sen. Heherson Alvarez, Manila Mayor Lito Atienza, and other local officials led yesterday's unveiling.

The six-foot tall bronze-cast statue of Aquino is at the corner of Pedro Gil Street and Roxas Boulevard, the best spot for the statue, Atienza said.

"People who pass by would see the statue. Through this we would remember Ninoy's heroism everyday," Atienza said.

The statue, by sculptor Julie Lluch, depicts Aquino with one foot resting on the bench, his left arm pointing toward the horizon.

Dynamic

"Many have placed statues who all look like my father, very generic. But this one really had a concept, and it captured his personality. The pose looks very dynamic," said Noynoy Aquino, who said he was deeply touched.

He cited one photo where his father, wearing rubber boots, was in a pose similar to that of the statue, while having a dialogue with some constituents in Tarlac.

"For those who do not know much about my father, when they come here and see the statue, they would wonder who that is, and what he did." *With reports from Gerald G. Lacuarta, Tarra Quismundo; AP*

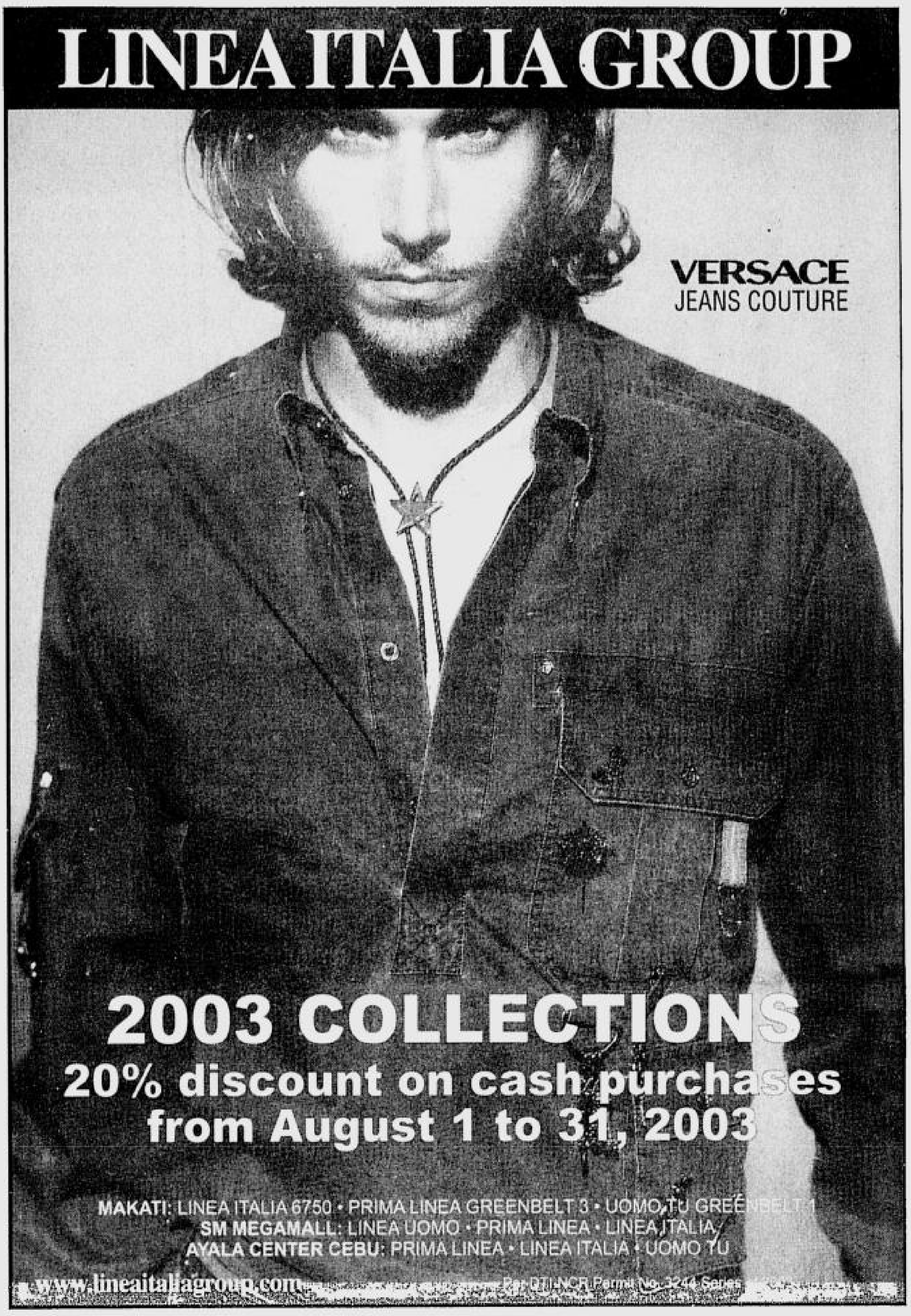
Tita Cory is my role model—Glo

From page A1

said in Filipino: "I always say Tita Cory is my role model because she has experienced this during her term."

Ms Macapagal admitted that it was difficult dealing with the country's problems. She asked: "I strive hard to do this but sometimes I get a different result?" Ms Macapagal said she has taken President Aquino's advice to heart, which is to entrust her work to the Lord and just make sure that everything she does is right.

Aquino urged the public to throw their support behind President Macapagal especially at a time when a lot of people were criticizing her. "I will continue to pray for her and I support her. She has been doing many good things. She needs our support because her success will lead to our success."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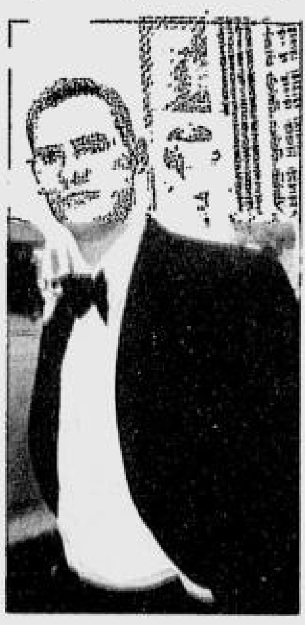
A grateful nation remembers

WHERE Ninoy fell at the international airport that now bears his name and a marker, his youngest sister Sen. Tessie Aquino-Oreta and August Twenty One Movement (Atom) representative Reli German (at right) lay wreaths of remembrance. JOE ARAZAS

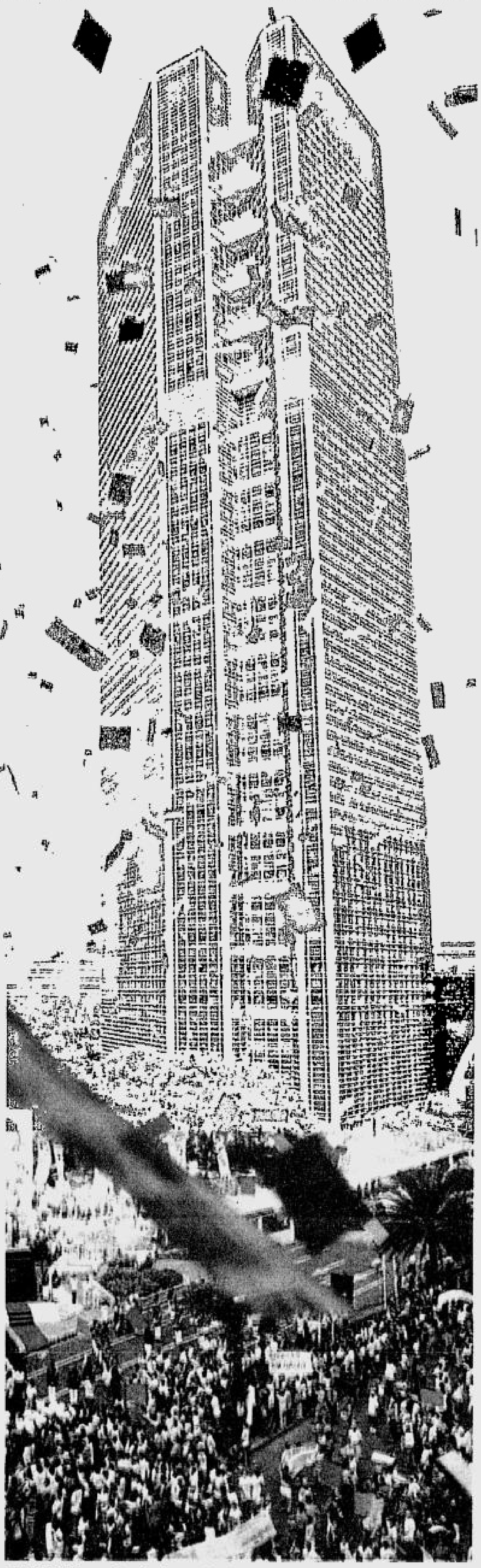
THE ORIGINALS reprise their days of rage with glee: Rep. Butz Aquino, Kiyoshi Wakamiya and Makati Mayor Jojo Binay. MANDY NAVASERO



MANDY NAVASERO

WHY the formal wear? Because Canadian lawyer Peter Kucherepa says occasion is worth dressing up for.

RETURNING to the site of his many assignments, former staffer of Mr. and Ms Special Edition, JP Fenix, meets an old friend, Leah Navarro. MANDY NAVASERO



THE WAY it was in the days of furious protest. Confetti rains on Ayala Avenue. ERIK ARAZAS

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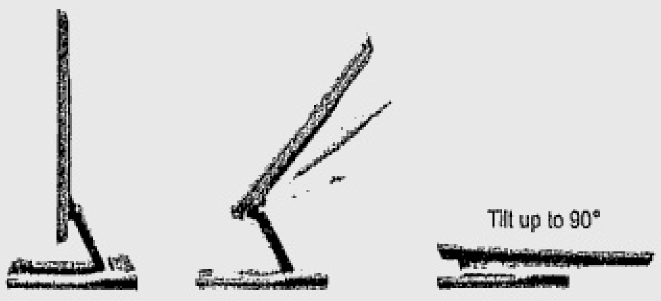

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Graft, plunder raps filed vs Binay

By Alcuin Papa

A NON-GOVERNMENT organization on Wednesday filed graft and plunder charges against former Makati City Mayor Elenita Binay and seven others for the alleged anomalous purchase of P430 million worth of hospital and office equipment, which the Commission on Audit (COA) recently uncovered.

The group Campaign for Public Accountability (CPA) have accused Binay, wife of incumbent Mayor Jejomar Binay, and the others of engaging in plunder, falsification of documents, estafa, and of violating the code of conduct and ethical standards for government officials and employees, as well as the Anti-graft and Corrupt Practices Act.

COA officials last year undertook an audit of purchases and transactions which the City of Makati made in 2000 and 2001.

In a four-page complaint, Roberto Brillante, chair of the Makati-based CPA, claimed the eight officials "acted in concert" to "defraud" the city of P430 million through falsification of documents, overpricing and "ghost deliveries" of hospital and office equipment, textbooks and trucks.

Charged with Binay were Apollo Carreon of the Apollo Medical Equipment and Supplies, City Administrator Nicanor Santiago, City Treasurer Luz Yamane, General Services Chief Ernesto Aspillaga, Ospital ng Makati officer-in-charge Dr. Ramoncito Coronel and Makati Health Program chief Guia Bautista.

Lito Anzures, a spokesperson for the Binays, told the INQUIRER in a phone interview that the auditing procedures used by members of the COA special task force were "seriously flawed."

Anzures added that the Binay administration has already addressed the issue of the COA report.

"Maybe we should also look at the singer instead of the song," Anzures said. "Mr. Brillante himself has lost a number of libel cases."

Brillante was a former vice mayor of Makati.

In an earlier statement, Makati Vice Mayor Ernesto Mercado also questioned the report, describing it as "flawed."

Acting Ombudsman Margarito Gervacio also referred the report back to COA, citing Mercado's objections.

Gervacio also "temporarily closed and terminated" the proceedings for the filing of graft charges against concerned Makati officials.

In his complaint, Brillante said that the COA Special Task Force to Review and/or Audit Contracts Involving Infrastructure Projects and Purchases of Supplies, Materials and Equipment of Local Government Units in Metro Manila (STFLGUs) detailed the alleged anomalies in a 2002 report.

According to the report, COA auditors cited the purchase of 188 hospital beds, 220 bedside cabinets and four orthopedic beds for P36,431,700. But the actual cost of the equipment was only P2,447,376, the report showed.

Also, Makati officials allegedly bought books worth P124,924,229 in 2000 and P98,750,724 in 2001, "without securing the best terms for the government, contrary to the provisions of the Department of Education, Culture and Sports."

Citing the supposed discrepancies in the purchases, the COA also recommended the filing of graft charges against the private suppliers.

After doing time, MJ may get job back

By Philip Tubeza

AFTER paying his debt to society in the United States, Mark Jimenez may still get his old job back.

Although Jimenez has pleaded guilty to criminal charges in the US and appears headed for prison there, he continues to insist he is still congressman of Manila's sixth district.

Jimenez's lawyers yesterday filed a 36-page reply with the Supreme Court in support of his pleading for a temporary restraining order against the House of Representatives Electoral Tribunal (HRET) decision expelling him from Congress.

The HRET unseated Jimenez on March 6 after finding that he lacked the one-year residency in the district required of candidates.

Jimenez's lawyers argued the HRET had no jurisdiction over the case since the Commission on Elections had already ruled that their client had complied with the residency requirement.

If it had, they said, the HRET committed grave abuse of discretion "amounting to lack of jurisdiction" when it unseated Jimenez.

Jimenez is under home detention in Miami, Florida, where he was to go on trial on fraud and tax charges. On Aug. 3, he pleaded guilty to two counts of tax evasion and one count of election finance fraud.

According to US prosecutors, he faces 21 months in jail.

But Jimenez's local lawyers have not given up the fight to regain his congressional seat.

It said the HRET could not overturn the Comelec resolution that had favored Jimenez.

The lawyers said in their petition that "what has been finally decided by Comelec cannot be reviewed by the HRET."

Unrepentant, ex-con lands in jail anew

By Tarra Quismundo

A MAN fresh out of jail and his two companions yesterday were arrested for robbing passengers of a Pasay-bound jeepney in Manila on Wednesday.

Suspects Marc Roxas, 21, and Demil Gacosan Jr., 19, both of Ermita, Manila, and Christopher Agustin, 22, of Mandaluyong City, are now in the custody of the Western Police District's Special Operations Group (SOG).

According to the SOG, the robbery took place at Plaza Lawton in Ermita at around 1:15 p.m. Wednesday.

SPO4 Danilo de Gala said that when victim Marvin Gonzales, 26, of Pasay City, got on board the jeepney, the suspects drew their knives and announced the holdup.

The victim said that the suspects tried to flee when the jeepney stopped near the Manila City Hall. But lawmen caught the suspects after a brief chase on Burgos Street.

Police recovered the victim's wallet.

De Gala said Agustin, a member of Batang City Jail (BCJ), last week finished a three-year sentence at the Manila City Jail.

Gacosan is also a member of BCJ, which, De Gala said, is a gang infamous for robberies in Metro Manila. Meanwhile, Roxas is a member of Bahala na Gang.

De Gala said the three face charges of robbery, illegal possession of deadly weapon, and resisting arrest.

FORMER President Corazon Aquino, with President Macapagal-Arroyo and Manila Mayor Joselito Atienza, walks past the statue of her husband, Benigno "Ninoy" Aquino Jr., which has just been unveiled on Roxas Boulevard, Manila, to mark the 20th anniversary of the senator's death.

EDWIN BACASMAS

Lawman sacked for 1999 killing

By Tarra Quismundo

A POLICEMAN who has been linked to the death of Romulo Rodeo in 1999, has been dismissed from the service.

The People's Law Enforcement Board of Manila found P03 Rocco Matic guilty of grave misconduct when he arrested Rodeo on September 16, 1999.

The victim's wife, Marina, found Rodeo dead with a gunshot in the nape, when she went to the PAOCTF office in Camp Crame, Quezon City to inquire about her husband.

In the PLEB report, Marina said that Rodrigo Cruz invited her husband out for a drink on the night he was killed.

During the PLEB hearings, it was learned that Matic, a former officer of the Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Task Force (PAOCTF), got upset with Cruz at the Gabby's bar, in Sta. Ana, Manila.

Witnesses told the board that Matic had begun threatening the bar customers with his gun. Cruz seized the gun and ran away, to prevent the lawman from hurting the customers.

Unable to catch up with Cruz, Matic came back to the bar and dragged Rodeo to his car. A witness testified that she saw Matic hitting Rodeo with his rifle.

Cops predict drop in drug busts, cite heavy toll on pushers

By Edson Tandoc Jr.

WITH the President's deadline in the war against drugs drawing near, police officials are predicting that the number of drug-related arrests will dwindle over the next few weeks.

Police officials are quick to add that the government's anti-drug campaign is not waning. If they are to be believed, the reason for the predicted decline is that the anti-drug drive has dealt a serious blow to drug syndicates in the country.

In the Northern Police District, statistics show a decrease in the number of drug-related arrests, from 173 persons (from July 20 to Aug. 5) to 135 persons (from Aug. 6 to Aug. 13).

NPD director Marcelino Franco Jr. told the INQUIRER the pattern was likely to continue in the coming weeks.

He also noted a drop in the supply—and increase of prices—of illegal drugs in the CAMANAVA (Caloocan, Malabon and Valenzuela and the municipality of Navotas) area.

5 armed men sow terror in Taguig

By Alcuin Papa

THE WILDCAT area of Western Bicutan in the town of Taguig turned into the Wild West Wednesday night after five heavily armed men shot up the place and shot it out with policemen.

While no one was hit in the gun play, the five suspects managed to elude a police search and a saturation drive.

According to Sr. Supt. Rodolfo Sison, Taguig police chief, residents reported the presence of the armed men at about 11:30 p.m.

Senior Insp. Jimmy Mandario led a police team to the area and was led by barangay tanods to where the suspects were terrorizing residents.

Upon seeing the armed men, Mandario and his men told them to lay down their guns.

But instead of heeding the order, the suspects opened fire at the policemen.

A 30-minute fire fight and chase ensued with the suspects running in different directions.

Mandario and his men reportedly were unable to radio for backup and catch the suspects because of the maze of houses, the darkness and the presence of innocent people.

At about 2 a.m., the policemen had given up the search and the suspects had completed their escape.

Taguig Mayor Sigfrido Tinga went to the area and ordered a saturation drive in an attempt to find any illegal firearms being kept by residents but none was reported found.

A subsequent police investigation identified one of the armed men as a certain Domingo, who is a former member of the Philippine Army.

Trader is 6th . . .

From page A20

killings, the WPD said it was stepping up street surveillance and a crackdown on loose firearms.

Police spokesperson Chief Insp. Gerry Agunod said they would start accosting vehicles without license plates and suspicious persons riding in tandem on motorcycles.

"The detective beat patrol and the mobile unit have been mobilized to help stop incidents of ambush and to catch the suspects in the previous ones," he said.

Moreover, persons with death threats would be given security to prevent the threats from being carried out, Agunod added.

The WPD has also begun implementing "Oplan Bakal" upon the orders of the National Capital Regional Police Office. "Oplan Bakal" targets loose firearms that could be used in crimes.

Agunod earlier said the spate of ambuscades in Manila were "isolated" incidents and were not indicative of rising criminality in the city.

He explained that the victims just happened to be in Manila when their attackers struck.

METROBRIEFS

6 cops charged

MANUELITO de Vera has filed robbery in band, theft and arbitrary detention charges against six members of the Central Police District. The lawmen: SP02 Manuel Saldana, POs2 Angelito Resurreccion and Remegio Juan, POs1 Conrado Lim, Jeremiah Inglis and Eliseo Santos, had arrested De Vera at the Calderon Inn in Project 4, Quezon City, on March 5. The policemen allegedly detained him at the CPD Station 8 before releasing him without charges. De Vera said he lost cash and valuables after his release. *Tina Santos*

Bodies surface

THE BODIES of 14-year-old Aljohn Escabo and his 35-year-old uncle, Gerry Janipin, who both drowned during Tuesday's rains have been found. Residents of Pacweld Village found the boy's remains at about 6 a.m. yesterday under the Tullahan Bridge in Barangay Marulas, Valenzuela City, while the body of Janipin was found two hours later floating in Barangay Tenejeros, Malabon City. Escabo slipped into the rain-swollen Tullahan River and Janipin tried to save him. *Edson Tandoc Jr.*

UST doc rescued

ALERT neighbors saved gynecologist Naty Salde after she was attacked by a burglar inside her house in Barangay Pinagbuhatan in Pasig City Wednesday night. Salde who works at the University of Sto. Tomas Hospital was alone when suspect Oliverto Escalante, 36, struck at about 7 p.m. Escalante reportedly hit the doctor several times with a steel bar. Neighbors heard Salde's cries and informed barangay officials. *Luige del Puerto*

Grenades for shabu

ARIEL Lopez Gonzalo, 22, of Valdez Compound, Paso de Blas, Valenzuela City, needed a blast of shabu so badly that he was willing to exchange two grenades for a few sachets of the illegal drug. Gonzalo was collared inside the Gana Compound in Camachille, Quezon City at 11 p.m. Wednesday. He was then looking for a certain "Dikong," an alleged pusher. *Tina Santos*

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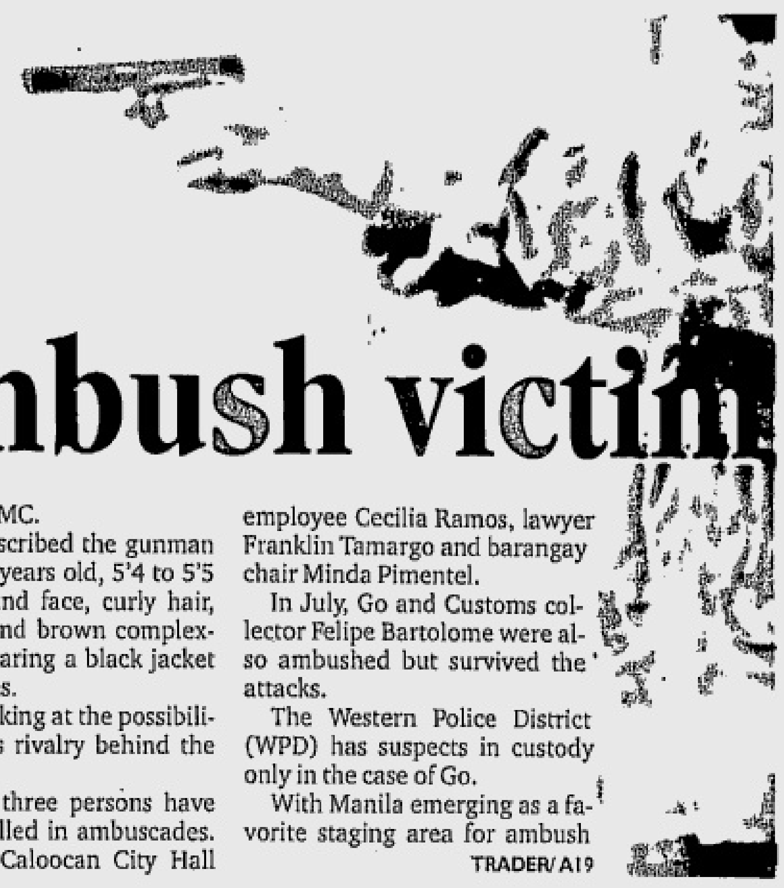

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MANILA VIOLENCE

Trader is 6th ambush victim

By Leila B. Salaverria

THE RASH of violence in Manila has claimed the life of businessman Benigno D. Medina, 58, who was gunned down by a lone suspect in Sta. Cruz on Wednesday afternoon.

Medina was the sixth shooting victim since Philippine Amateur Track and Field Association president Go Teng Kok was ambushed by two men on July 1.

According to SPO2 Edmundo Cabal, Medina was talking to his helper, Dodong Abellar, in front of the BDM Medical Supplies store which he owns at 1746 Rizal Avenue when the lone gunman struck at 5:45 p.m.

The still unidentified suspect pumped several bullets from a .38 caliber revolver into Medina's body before fleeing on foot toward the Jose Reyes Memorial Medical Center (JRMMC).

Medina was declared dead on arrival at the JRMMC.

Witnesses described the gunman as about 30-35 years old, 5'4 to 5'5 tall, with a round face, curly hair, medium built and brown complexion. He was wearing a black jacket with gray sleeves.

Police are looking at the possibility of a business rivalry behind the killing.

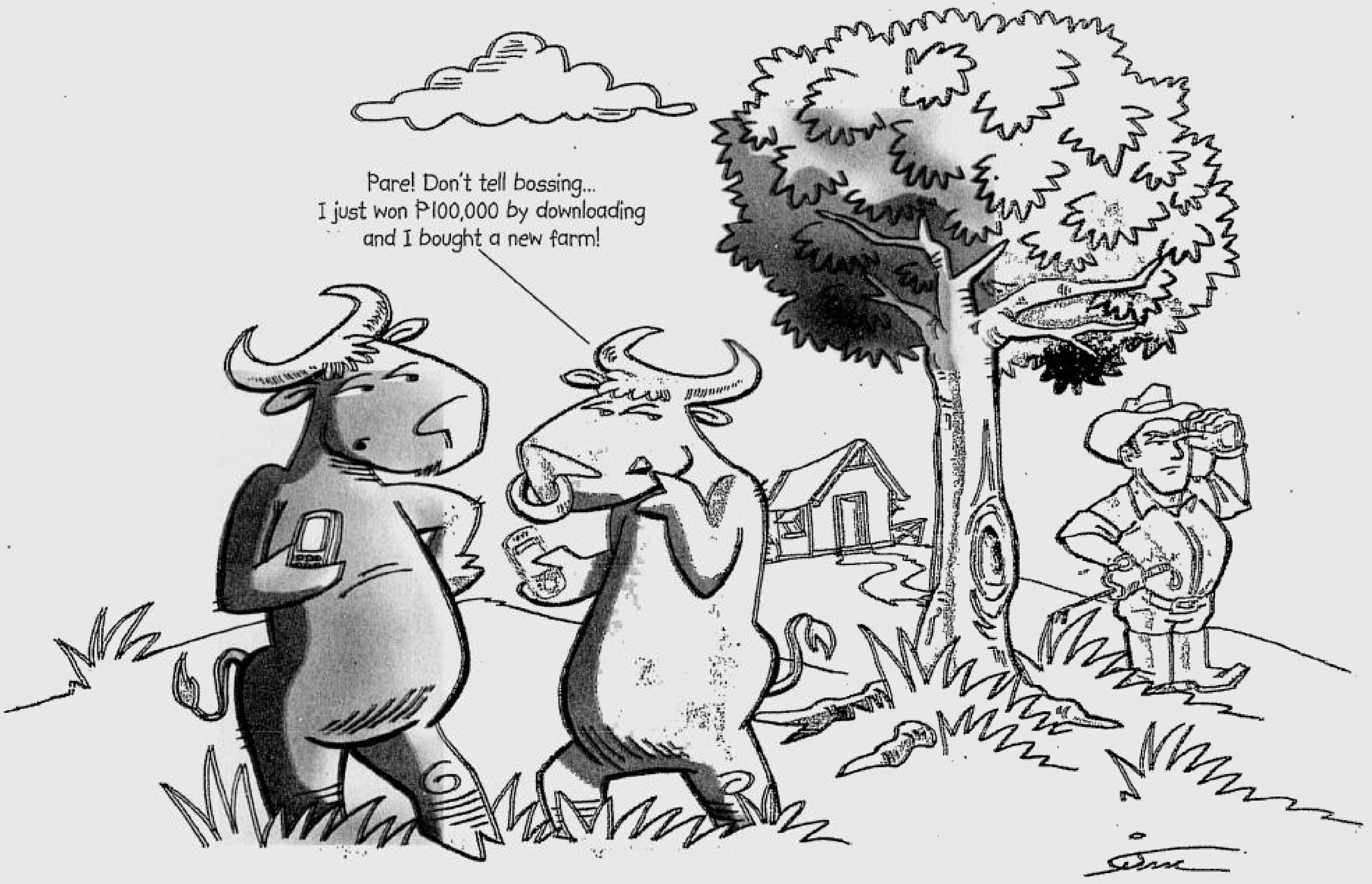
This month, three persons have already been killed in ambuscades. The three are Caloocan City Hall employee Cecilia Ramos, lawyer Franklin Tamargo and barangay chair Minda Pimentel.

In July, Go and Customs collector Felipe Bartolome were also ambushed but survived the attacks.

The Western Police District (WPD) has suspects in custody only in the case of Go.

With Manila emerging as a favorite staging area for ambush

TRADER/A19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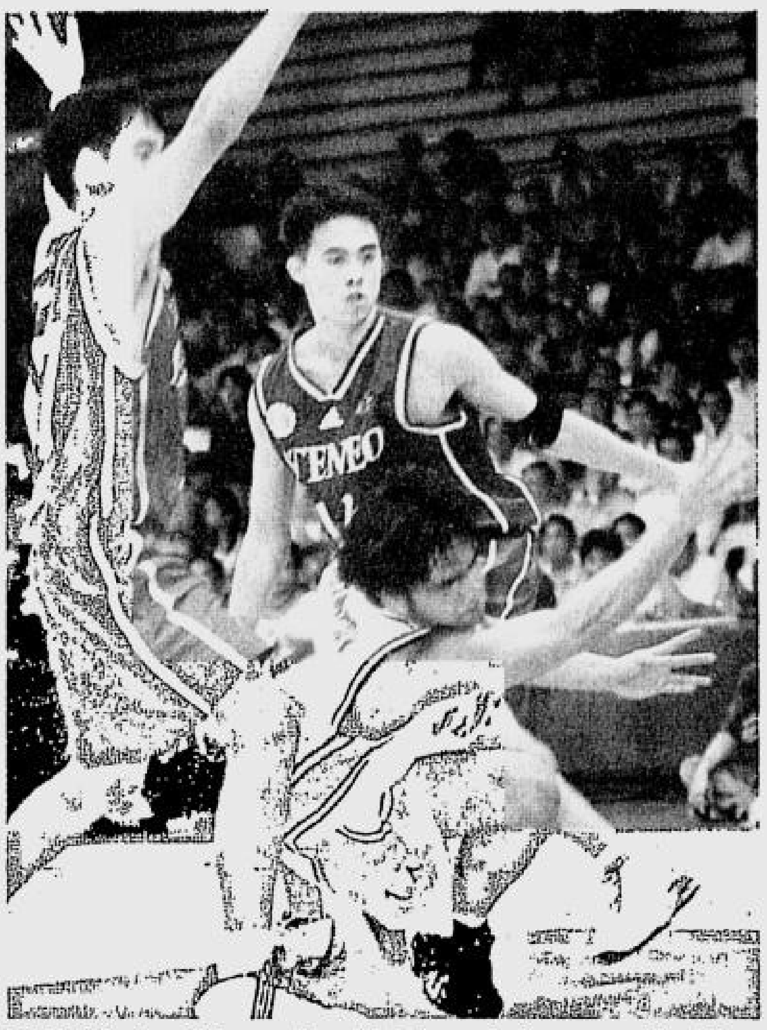
- Philsports hosts PBA rubber match tomorrow /A22

Erratic Tams gore Bulldogs; Eagles up

GAMES TOMORROW (Blue Eagle Gym)
11 a.m.—UE vs UP (jrs)
2 p.m.—UP vs UE (srs)
4 p.m.—La Salle vs UST (srs)
6 p.m.—La Salle vs Ust (jrs)

By Dennis U. Eroa



MARK Abadia of Adamson loses his balance during a scramble with Larry Fonacier (right) and Tiu of Ateneo. AUGUST DELA CRUZ

FRONTRUNNER Far Eastern bucked an error-filled game to pulverize National University, 69-56, while titleholder Ateneo continued its remarkable climb in the UAAP men's basketball championship at the Loyola Gym.

Careless and disorganized, the Tamaraws turned the ball over a season-high 44 times, but more than made up for this by controlling the boards with authority over the smaller, hapless Bulldogs.

The Tamaraws improved their record to 8-1, moving to within a win of securing a Final Four spot. The Bulldogs absorbed their eight straight loss for a 1-8 record.

The Eagles pulled off a masterful 69-55 win over Adamson and kept second place with a 7-2 slate.

Adamson, which dropped to 4-5, had an explosive start against Ateneo, 13-3, but soon collapsed when the Eagles bannered by Doug Kramer, Rich Alvarez, Paolo Bugia, Wesley Gonzales and Macky Escalona found their rhythm.

With main man Gerard Jones playing shakily, swingman Cesar Catli took charge for FEU. He added 13 rebounds in a department ruled by the Tams, 54-29.

Coach Koy Banal took the blame for FEU's turnover-prone show. "I asked them to push the bar higher, but it backfired. I must apologize to the players," said Banal.

"I'm thinking about our match against Ateneo on Sunday," Banal added.

FEU had nothing to worry about, however.

With the Bulldogs showing little bite, the Tamaraws immediately sprinted to a 28-6 advantage to the delight of the FEU gallery.

The Tamaraws powered their way to a 44-21 lead and Catli's third triple made it 58-32, 2:12 remaining in the third quarter.

Then came the errors which allowed the Bulldogs to somewhat get back into the fight.

Catli and Ryan Rizada finished with seven turnovers each, while veteran Rhagnee Sinco and James Razon combined for 11.

The Eagles, who dropped their first two games but were virtually unchallenged since then, took a 40-30 edge at halftime and had complete control of the game from there.

But the match ended on a sour note as Adamson mentor Luigi Trillo and some of his players engaged coach Joel Banal and the Eagles in a word war at the final buzzer before cooler heads intervened.

Scores:

First Game (srs)

FEU 69—Catli 20, Isip 11, Rizada 11, Sierra 9, Santos 6, Zablan 4, Yabut 3, Sinco 2, Razon 2, Chan 1, Jones 0, Barcellano 0.

NU 56—Mendoza 11, Baguion 9, Malagueno 8, Tolentino 6, Cajayon 6, Miclat 6, Balijon 6, Malcontento 3, Catamora D 1, Catamora 0, Mollena 0.

Quarters: 28-6, 44-21, 58-35, 69-56

Second Game (srs)

ATENEO 69—Kramer 11, Tenorio 10, Bugia 9, Gonzales 8, Fonacier 6, Alvarez 6, Escalona 6, Intal 4, Arao 4, Membrere 3, Tiu 2, Yao 0.

ADAMSON 55—Abadia 11, Tagupa 9, Alonzo 8, Poloyapoy 8, Tiongco 5, Bono 4, Catabay 4, Hate 3, Tajonera 3, Kong 2.

Quarters: 22-23, 40-30, 54-42, 69-55

RP, Malaysia seal Seaba title match

By Marc Anthony Reyes

KUALA LUMPUR—The Philippines overpowered Vietnam, 99-48, and Malaysia downed Thailand, 74-66, Wednesday to arrange a winner-take-all showdown for the Southeast Asian Basketball Association championship at the Malaysia Amateur Basketball Association (Maba) gym.

The defending champion Filipinos, sponsored by Cebuana Lhuillier, and the Malaysians were scheduled to meet for the title Thursday night after the clash for third between Thailand and Vietnam.

As the top two teams in the round robin tournament, RP and Malaysia made it to the Asian Basketball Confederation championship slated Sept. 22-Oct. 3 in China.

As in their 83-56 rout of Thailand Tuesday, the Filipinos needed the entire first half to get their offense going.

Vietnam, which will host the Southeast Asian Games this December, kept the Philippines within striking distance at halftime, 30-40, thanks to the sniping of guard To Van Thanh and forwards Paul Chong and Le Minh Chi.

But coach Aric del Rosario ordered a full-court press in the second half and the Filipinos quickly broke away to a 68-41 lead.

The Filipinos, also the SEAG champions, poured it on in the last quarter, limiting the hapless Vietnamese to only seven points while unloading 31 to complete the rout.

Del Rosario later called off a scheduled afternoon workout Thursday for his boys, who seized the free time to visit the malls.

Gary David and Emerson Oreta led the RP assault against Vietnam with 21 and 18 points, respectively.

The Filipinos finished with 55.84 percent from the floor against Vietnam's 30.43 clip.

RP 99—David 21, Madrid 18, Oreta 13, De Ocampo 10, Pingris 9, Cruz 8, Franco 6, Calimag 4, Melancio 4, Sotto 2, Wilson 2, Omolon 2.

VIETNAM 48—Sang 9, Ching 8, Khang 7, Thanh 7, Tied 5, Hai 4, Chi 2, Manh 2, Binh 0, Tai 0, Duc 0.

Quarters: 19-13, 40-30, 68-41, 99-48.

SPORTS TV

Compiled by L. Mangulat

MOTOR SPORTS: 2003 F1 Hungarian Grand Prix Qualifying; 7:55 p.m.; Star Sports - Will Juan Pablo Montoya finally catch Michael Schumacher? Find out as race action continues in Hungary.

BASEBALL MLB - Braves vs Giants; 10 a.m. (r - 3.30 p.m. and 9:30 p.m.); ESPN - NL powers Atlanta and San Francisco face each other as the race for the pennant heats up.

GOLF: US Amateur Open Championship, tomorrow at 2 a.m., ESPN.

Paragua settles for draw

FILIPINO Mark Paragua drew with fellow IM Rodney Perez of Cuba in the seventh round and slipped to a share of second place in the 1st International Del Solsones chess championship Wednesday night at the Solsona Gym in Cataluna, Spain.

Paragua's third draw gave him 5.5 points, just half a point behind coleaders IMs Yuri Gonzales and Frank De la Paz of Cuba.

Gonzales stopped the five-game winning run of Filipino IM Joseph Sanchez, who remained at 5 points. Tied with Sanchez was top seeded GM Sergei Tiviakov of the Netherlands and 13 others. *With a report from NM Marlon Bernardino*

Knights seek repeat over Blazers today

GAMES TODAY *(Rizal Coliseum)*
11:30 a.m.—Letran vs CSB (Jrs/Srs)
4 p.m.—SBC vs UPHR (Srs/Jrs)

LETRAN tries to inch closer to a Final Four seat when it takes on College of St. Benilde today in the NCAA basketball tournament at the Rizal Colieum.

STANDINGS	W	L
Letran	7	3
JRU	7	4
SSC-R	7	4
Mapua	6	4
SBC	6	4
UPHR	3	7
CSB	3	8
PCU	3	8

Riding the momentum of a recent win over the San Beda Lions, the Knights are raring to improve their league-leading 7-3 record against the cellar-dwelling Blazers at 2 p.m. and strengthen their bid to make it to the elite Final Four cast.

The Lions, who also lost to defending champion San Sebastian, hope to stop their slide when they tangle with the Perpetual Help Altas at 4 p.m.

Mathematically, the Knights need only two more victories to qualify in the next phase but to avoid complications, they should rack up 10 wins.

The Blazers share the cellar with the PCU Dolphins at 3-8 and another setback practically dooms the 2000 NCAA champions.

CSB's only hope is for Mapua and San Beda, both at 6-4, to lose their remaining games while the Blazers sweep the rest of their assignments.

Should the Lions win over the Altas and the Cardinals score another victory, the season would be definitely over for the Blazers and the Dolphins.

But for the moment, the Blazers should find a way to stop Letran's Ronjay Enrile, Boyet Bautista, Eric Rodriguez, Kris Reyes, Jonathan Pinera and Aaron Aban if they want to avenge their 75-77 loss in the first round. *June Navarro*

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Mike Arroyo swamped with thanks

TWO top Philippine sports officials have reiterated their gratitude to First Gentleman Jose Miguel Arroyo for helping boost the country's Southeast Asian Games campaign in Vietnam this year.

Philippine Sports Commission (PSC) chair Eric Buhain and Philippine Olympic Committee (POC) president Celso Dayrit said Mr. Arroyo helped fast track the preparation and training for the games with last week's successful pledging session at the Heroes Hall of the Malacañang Palace.

Buhain and Dayrit said all the national athletes are sure to benefit from the close to P24 million in pledges from the country's top corporations and private donors who heeded Mr. Arroyo's call to become active sports partners of government.

Funds initially netted during the pledging session, which will be divided equitably among the 85 gold medal potentials from 17 sports, will be spent for their training and buildup for the Vietnam campaign.

President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo has assured the PSC of funding for the athletes' actual participation in the Games.

"There are still more corporations presently signifying their interest in joining the bandwagon of the First Gentleman in giving support to the athletes' campaign in the SEA Games," said Rod Nepomuceno, project director of the FG Foundation.

"We deeply appreciate the First Gentleman's concern for sports," Buhain said. "We were not surprised by his taking a direct action in helping boost our sports programs, but we did not expect Atty. Arroyo to really take a hands-on approach in realizing his dreams for Philippine sports. And for that, we are really thankful to him and the President."

Dayrit also lauded the project, saying, "We are very grateful to the donors. The athletes will greatly benefit from this project initiated by the First Gentleman's Foundation."

Strong bets for medal victories in the December 5-13 Vietnam SEA Games were presented during the pledging session. They all become representatives of the "Medalyang Ginto...May Laban Tayo" campaign of the First Gentleman.

BI awaits DOJ move on 'Fil-fors'

By June Navarro

PRESSED for faster action on Fil-foreign players found to have faked their citizenship, the Bureau of Immigration has furnished the Department of Justice the pieces of evidence compiled by the Senate committees that probed the case.

The move came in the wake of reports that the Justice department couldn't act on the BI's request due to the lack of vital pieces of evidence to pin down the Fil-fors.

"We wrote another letter to the DOJ and this time we gave them copies of the Senate report for them to appreciate the details and evaluate the facts of the case," said Immigration executive secretary Roy Almoro yesterday.

"Sen. (Robert) Barbers called up last Tuesday and I informed him about the developments. It shows the senator's sincerity to finish the case," Almoro added.

The Senate plenary recently adopted the joint recommendation of the Senate committees on games, amusements and sports chaired by Barbers and constitutional amendments headed by Sen. Edgardo Angara for the summary deportation of Talk 'N Text's Asi Taulava, Rudy Hatfield of Coca-Cola, Alaska's John Ordonio, Andy Seigle of Purefoods, Red Bull Barako's Davonn Harp and Mick Pennisi, Barangay Ginebra's Alex Crisano, and Dorian Peña of San Miguel Beer.

The DOJ first has to revoke its confirmation of the citizenship of the players before the deportation could be carried out.

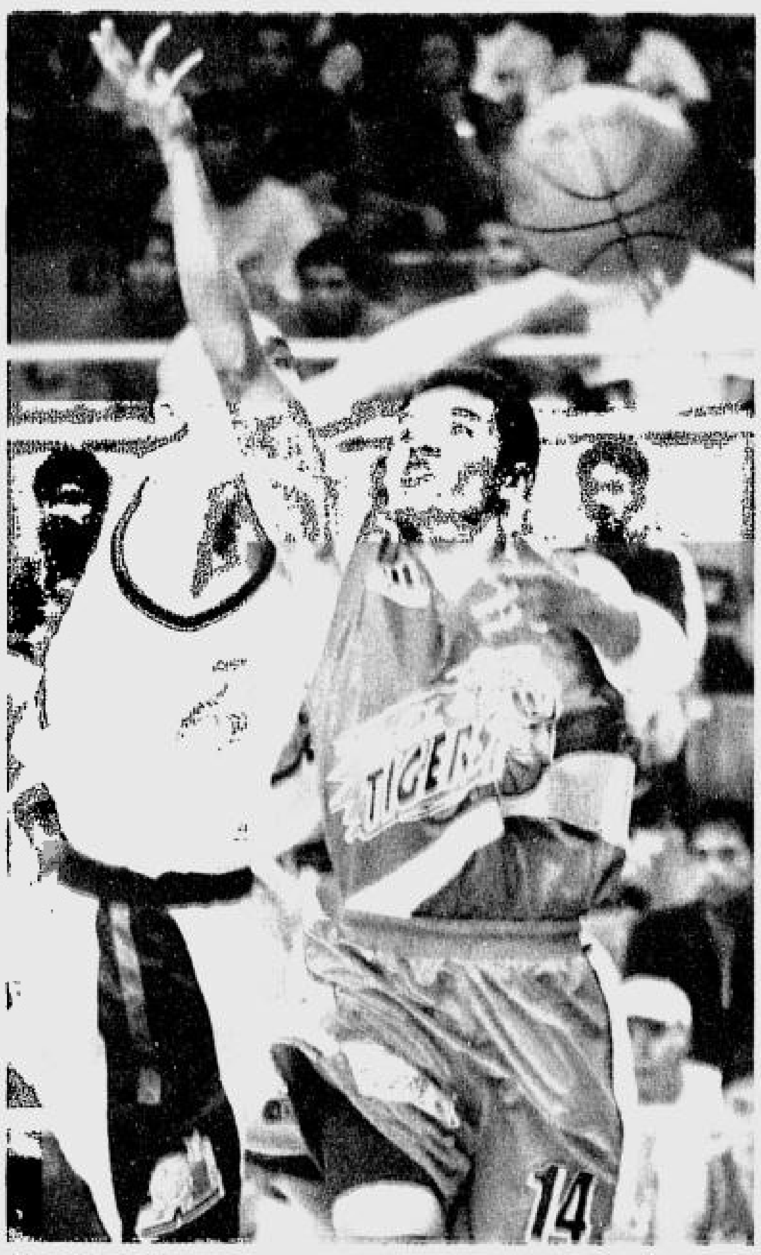
Almoro was earlier tasked by Immigration chief Andrea Domingo to spearhead and institute deportation proceedings on the Fil-fors within 30 days from the time the Senate threw the case to the BI last week. The deadline falls on Sept. 12.

Domingo immediately wrote DOJ secretary Simeon Datumanong following the Senate committee recommendation asking the justice department to cancel the Filipino citizenship confirmation of the Fil-fors.

"But until now, we have yet to receive an official communication from the DOJ. Our hands are tied. *Hindi kami makakilos dahil wala pang* revocation *na galing sa* DOJ," Almoro told the INQUIRER.

Once the justice department cancels the citizenship of the Fil-fors, Almoro said his committee, composed of five lawyers including himself, would immediately act on the deportation proceedings against the Fil-fors.

Almoro said two Fil-foreign players would be assigned to each committee member to hasten the proceedings and meet the 30-day deadline.



ALASKA'S John Arigo swipes the ball from a driving Johnny Abarrientos of Coca-Cola in their game Wednesday night. The Aces forced a sudden death match for the Invitational crown. ERNIE U. SARMIENTO

Philsports hosts PBA sudden death tomorrow

THE PHILIPPINE Basketball Association and the Philsports Arena have settled their differences over advertising, paving the way for the pro league's return to the sports facility.

As a result, the rubber match between Coca-Cola and Alaska for the Samsung PBA Invitational championship has been scheduled tomorrow at the Philsports Arena.

The PBA decision to tap Philsports again came after the Philippine Sports Commission, which maintains the arena, agreed to remove streamers in the venue not included in the PBA's list of sponsors.

PBA media bureau chief Willie Marcial said that except for the decals on the floor, all ads at the venue would be taken off. *June Navarro*

Take My Son

"Sports is nothing if it is not fortified by the vitamin of spiritual nourishment."—ASM

SPECTATOR

Al S. Mendoza

A WEALTHY man and his son loved to collect rare works of art.

They had everything in their collection, from Picasso to Raphael. They would often sit together and admire the great works of art.

When the Vietnam conflict broke out, the son went to war. He was very courageous and died in battle while rescuing another soldier. The father was notified and he grieved deeply for his only son.

About a month later, just before Christmas, there was a knock at the door. A young man stood at the door with a large package in his hands. He said, "Sir, you don't know me, but I am the soldier for whom your son gave his life. He saved many lives that day, and he was carrying me to safety when a bullet struck him in the heart and he died instantly. He often talked about you, and your love for art."

The young man held out this package. "I know this isn't much. I'm not really a great artist, but I think your son would have wanted you to have this."

The father opened the package. It was a portrait of his son, painted by the young man. He stared in awe at the way the soldier had captured the personality of his son in the painting. The father was so drawn to the eyes that his own eyes welled up with tears.

He thanked the young man and offered to pay him for the picture. "Oh, no sir, I could never repay what your son did for me. It's a gift."

The father hung the portrait over his mantle. Every time visitors came to his home he took them to see the portrait of his son before he showed them any of the other great works he had collected.

The man died a few months later. There was to be a great auction of his paintings. Many influential people gathered, excited over seeing the great paintings and having an opportunity to purchase one for their collection.

On the platform sat the painting of the son. The auctioneer pounded his gavel. "We will start the bidding with this picture of the son. Who will bid for this picture?"

For a moment-silence. Then a voice in the back of the room shouted, "We want to see the famous paintings. Skip this one."

But the auctioneer persisted. "Will someone bid for this painting? Who will start the bidding? $100? $200?"

Another voice shouted angrily. "We didn't come to see this painting. We came to see the Van Goghs, the Rembrandts. Get on with the real bids!"

But still the auctioneer continued. "The son! The son! Who'll take the son?"

Finally, a voice came from the very back of the room. It was the longtime gardener of the man and his son. "I'll give $10 for the painting." Being a poor man, it was all he could afford.

"We have $10, who will bid $20?" announced the auctioneer.

"Give it to him for $10. Let's see the masters."

"$10 is the bid, won't someone bid $20?"

The crowd was becoming angry. They didn't want the picture of the son. They wanted the more worthy investments for their collections. The auctioneer pounded the gavel. "Going once, twice. Sold for $10.00."

A man sitting on the second row shouted, "Now let's get on with the collection!"

The auctioneer laid down his gavel. "I'm sorry, the auction is over."

"What about the paintings?"

"I am sorry," said the auctioneer. "When I was called to conduct this auction, I was told of a secret stipulation in the will. I was not allowed to reveal that stipulation until this time. Only the painting of the son would be auctioned. Whoever bought that painting would inherit the entire estate, including the paintings. The man who took the son gets everything!"

***

FASTBREAK. God gave His son 2,000 years ago to die on a cruel cross. Much like the auctioneer, His message is: "The son, the son, who will take the son?" Because, you see, whoever takes the Son gets everything.

34th WNCAA season starts

THE WOMEN'S National Collegiate Athletic Association (WNCAA)-Adidas opens its 34th season today with the basketball event at the Philsports Arena.

A motorcade will be held from the Edsa-Guadalupe intersection before the 1 p.m. opening rites that will be shown live on RPN-9.

This season's theme is "Kababaihan: Itaguyod at Ipaglaban ang Pamilyang Pilipino at Kabataan," with Siena College of Quezon City as host.

Defending champion Lyceum will take on College of St. Benilde, whom it beat for the crown last year, in the 3:30 p.m. main game.

Tomorrow, the volleyball event will commence at the Lyceum gym featuring 10 matches that will start at 8 a.m.

The other participating schools are Angelicum College, Assumption College, St. Scholastica's College, Miriam College, De La Salle-Zobel, St. Benedict College, comebacking Chiang Kai Shek, University of the Assumption-Pampanga, Rizal Technological University, Emilio Aguinaldo College and St. Stephen High School.

SPORTSWATCH

Badminton registry swells to 500

THE ROSTER for this year's JVC Open Badminton Championships hit the 500-player mark, forcing the organizing IMG (International Management Group) to add another three days to the scheduled three-day qualifier starting today at the PSC Badminton Hall at the Rizal Memorial Sports Complex. The tournament proper will fire off Aug. 25 at the Glorietta Activity Center in Makati with cash awards and fabulous prizes up for grabs in five events featuring the country's best players, junior stars and entries from the corporate world, which drew a total of 39 teams. The brother-sister tandem of Kennevic and Kennie Asuncion, many-time internationalists, leads the field that more than doubled the roster when the sponsoring JVC first staged the tournament in 2001.

Cone Scoop guest today

ALASKA Coach Tim Cone will be the guest in today's Scoop Sa Kamayan at the Kamayan Restaurant, Quezon Avenue in Quezon City. Cone is expected to discuss the Aces' chances against the Coca Cola Tigers in their sudden death showdown for the Samsung PBA championship. The session starts at 10:30 a.m., but will be aired on Sports Radio starting at 11 a.m.

Mid-Amateur golf in Lipa

LIPA CITY—The second Active Group Mid-Amateur Open blasts off today at the Mount Malarayat Golf and Country Club's Lobo, Malinpuyo and Makulot courses. "On behalf of the club, I would like to welcome all our guests," said Tony Turalba, chair of both the Active Group of Mount Malarayat. A maximum of 120 players, grouped into the Championship Division and Classes A, B and C based on their NGAP and IPI handicap indexes, are playing in the two-day, 36-hole event. Heading the field is Dave Hernandez, who topped the Championship Division last year.

UST booters edge Ateneo, 1-0

ROOKIE-laden University of Santo Tomas applied relentless pressure on Ateneo to prevail, 1-0, recently and get back on track in the Ang Liga football cup at the UST pitch. National player and Tiger striker Ricardo Becite accounted for the game's lone goal in the 35th minute, firing a cannonball into the back of the net that sailed past Ateneo keeper Miguel Villadolid. The Tigers then adhered to Coach Nonnoy Carpio's defensive posturing to foil the Eagles' repeated attacks, including a penalty kick by Tristan Tongson that was saved by Tiger keeper BJ Valenzuela in the 85th minute. UST posted its first win in two outings while Ateneo failed to improve on its scoreless draw at home against UAAP champion University of the East two weeks ago. The defeat dampened Coach Ompong Merida's hope of immediate gain from his three new recruits from Bacolod.

Saturday-only clinic listing open

ENROLLEES for the fifth series of Milo Checkmate Saturday-only clinic will still be accepted until tomorrow at the Rizal Memorial Sports Complex (RMSC) in Vito Cruz, Manila and at J & F Divino Bldg. at 967 Aurora Blvd. in Quezon City. The clinic at RMSC is conducted from 8 a.m. to 12 noon at the Badminton Bldg. while at J & F—from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. and 2 p.m. to 6 p.m. at the 4th level of the mini-arcade building. Open to young chessers who are 5 years old and above, the clinic will end on Sept. 21. For inquiries, call the Metropolitan Chess Club and Checkmate Phils. at 826-8560 and 0916-852-1069.

Age group triathlon goes to CDO

THE FIFTH stop of the Enervon National Age-group Triathlon series goes to Cagayan de Oro on Sunday. Starting at Lauremar Beach Resort in Opol, Misamis Oriental, the 750-meter swim, 20-kilometer bike and 5-km run competition finishes at Divisoria Bandstand in the heart of Cagayan de Oro City. Opol Mayor Yasay fires the starting gun at 6 a.m. The City Government of Cagayan de Oro through Mayor Vicente Emano, Kag. Michelle Tagarda and Edgar Cabanlas, and Municipality of Opol host this penultimate leg open to unrated triathletes at least 15 years old.

Clark drag race rained out

HEAVY rains forced organizers of the Petron Blaze Shootout Drag Race Championship Series to declare last Saturday's second round inside Clark Airbase null and void. Under the rules of the global motorsporting body Federacio Internationale de'l Automobile (FIA), event organizers may declare the races cancelled due to force majeure, in this case the torrents of monsoon rains that flooded parts of the Spur Road. The hazardous condition prompted race organizer Active Asia Association to stop the trial quarter mile runs. The third round has been set on August 30, simultaneous with the Centennial celebrations, also at Spur Road. For details, call Activity Asia Association at tel. 372-7374.

Manansala hosts 4-cock derby

CITO Manansala of Cavite will host a special 3-cock derby tonight at the air-conditioned Pasay City Cockpit. Sponsors are Sagupaan hammer, Sagupaan Mite Free and Sagupaan B-5- Forten. At stake is a cash prize of P150,000 while entry fee is P5,500. Entries will be accepted until 2 p.m. For inquiries, contact 843-1890, 843-1746 and 816-6750. Meanwhile, the annual "Richard L. Bates 7-Stag National Derby" sizzles at Pasay Cockpit on Aug. 28 and 30. Interested parties may contact him at 0916-3156991.

Cycling challenge set at PICC

THE MCCI Cycling Challenge, one of several circuit races where riders can earn berths to the 2004 Tour Pilipinas, will be held Aug. 31 at 7 a.m. at the PICC complex. Organized by the Manila Cultural Cycling Club Inc., the race is sanctioned by the Philippine National Cycling Association. For inquiries, call PNCA's Art Cayabyab at tel. no.5369378.

SUBIC TENNIS

Tierro upsets Ruel

SUBIC—Patrick John Tierro lived up to his billing as the country's most promising junior when he upset Davis Cupper and fourth seed Rolando Ruel Jr., 6-2, 0-6, 6-4, yesterday in the Cebuana-Lhuillier Tennis Circuit 2 at the Subic Bay International Tennis Center here.

The 18-year-old Tierro banked on his big forehand to forge a quarterfinal showdown with No. 11 Pop Sabandon, who pulled off a 7-5, 4-6, 6-2 win over sixth seed Jesse Lapore.

"I expected a tough match against Ruel because he's a national player. But I was not intimidated," said Tierro, who has just returned from a two-month campaign in the US.

Cebuano Jaime Solon defeated provincemate Ricardo Lagac Jr., 6-2, 6-1, to become the only unseeded player in the quarterfinals. He will face third seed Adelo Abadia, who beat No. 15 Roland Kraut, 6-2, 6-4.

Top seed and first leg champion Johnny Arcilla and second ranked Joseph Victorino also advanced.

Arcilla whipped No. 13 Chemiel Mantua, 6-2, 6-0, and will next play fifth seed Alexander Lazaro, who outlasted Luisito Clores, 7-5, 6-4.

Victorino, the Philta Open champion, beat No. 14 Beeyong Sison, 6-2, 6-2, and set up a match against No. 11 Rocky Paglalunan, a 7-5, 6-4 winner over unseeded Ricky Catito.

Laurente keeps OPBF diadem on split draw

THERE was no winner in the close, exciting bout but Oriental and Pacific Boxing Federation lightweight champion Dennis Laurente kept his title after a split draw with RP champ Fernando Montilla in the mainer of "Boksing Kontra Droga" Wednesday night at Casino Filipino in Parañaque.

Montilla, cheered on from ringside sparring [illegible] Manny Pacquiao, took the lead early with piercing jabs to the face.

But Laurente, 26, rated No. 8 by the WBC, rallied starting in the middle rounds with jab-straights. Scoring referee Bruce McTavish scored it 115-114 for Montilla; Ramon Flores tallied 117-111 for Laurente; while judge Alex Villacampa saw it 115-115. *Salven L. Lagumbay*

OLYMPIC QUALIFIERS

US five uses 3 'Ds' to rip Brazilians

SAN JUAN—The United States leaned on defense, depth and Tim Duncan to defeat a game Brazil 110-76 here Wednesday on the opening day of the FIBA Olympic basketball qualifying tournament of the Americas.

For one half, the Brazilians gave the Americans all they could handle—and some they couldn't, in the person of future National Basketball Association first-round pick Anderson Varejao, who scored 16 points.

When Team USA sputtered, coach Larry Brown simply went deeper into his bench stocked with NBA talent, finding Elton Brand, Mike Bibby and recent addition Kenyon Martin to complement Duncan, who again was by far the best player on the floor.

Duncan scored eight of his 17 points in the third quarter, when the US turned a two-point game into a blowout.

A 13-0 run closed the third quarter, gave Team USA a 78-55 lead and turned the final period into a dunking contest, with Martin and Vince Carter happily obliging.

That was a complete reversal from the first half, when Varejao and Nene contributed embarrassing dunks as the US fell behind 10 points early in the second quarter.

Mexico upset Argentina, 91-89, with Dallas Mavericks forward Eduardo Najera hitting four 3-pointers and scoring 20 points for the victors.

In other games, Puerto Rico beat Uruguay, 91-78 and the Dominican Republic edged Venezuela, 78-76. *AFP*

(Solar Sports will air the US-Dominican Republic game "live" at 10 a.m. on Channel 29 today. The replay will be at 5 p.m. on Channel 29 and IBC-13. Team USA will meet Venezuela on Saturday and the Virgin Islands on Sunday. These games will be shown "live" on Channel 29 at 10 a.m.)

TEAM USA's Allen Iverson (left) tries to get past Marcelo Machado of Brazil during their Fiba Olympic qualifying game Wednesday. AP

Southwoods virtual Luzvimin champions

MANILA Southwoods decided the issue a round too early, streaking to a 28-point lead yesterday in the Diamond division of the 11th WGAP Luzvimin Invitational golf tournament at the Cebu Country Club course.

Lora Roberto, the defending individual champion, assembled 49 points and emerged as the top scorer for the powerhouse Southwoods team whose four mainstays turned in 38 points or better.

Carmelette Villaroman and Tracy Locsin tallied 45 each and Arlette Dizon rounded out scoring with her 38 as Southwoods finished with 177 for the day and 352 for 36 holes.

Wack Wack drew 46 points from Stephanie Yu and went on to post 159-324, grabbing second place from Canlubang in the 54-hole tourney organized by the Women's Golf Association of the Philippines.

Canlubang wound up with 156 for 312, with Lina de Guzman keeping the individual lead with a 49 for 100.

Negros grabbed the Ruby division lead. Gabby Monfort and Maita Lustre teamed up for 86 points to give Negros 142 for the day and 282 for two rounds.

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Race 4—1. Pulilan Beauty 2. Ilang Ilang Queen 3. Seven Lakes 4. Cool Tights 5. Deity
Race 5—1. Bulakeña 2. Muro Ami 3. Silent Wind 4. Baccarat 5. Spinning Bullet
Race 6—1. Batangas Force 2. Dato's Pride 3. The Strategist 4. Luceat Lux 5. Sir Guguy
Race 7—1. American Beauty 2. Earth Angel 3. May's Magic 4. You and Me
Race 8—1. Moneyline 2. Security Risk 3. Haz It All 4. Migyt and Power 5. Sacred Hall
Race 9—1. Golden Cat 2. Alessandra 3. Pride of Mandaue 4. Pirouette 5. Maginoo's Pride
Race 10—1. Shape of the Wind 2. Swallow Ur Pride 3. Maple My Love 4. Native Talent 5. Rosa Valentina
Race 11—1. Red Thunder 2. Montpellier 3. Kantayok/Scene Stealer 4. Pep Up 5. Speed Charm
Race 12—1. Double Header 2. D Pen Traveller 3. Mini Skirt 4. Modulo Queen 5. Dedicated
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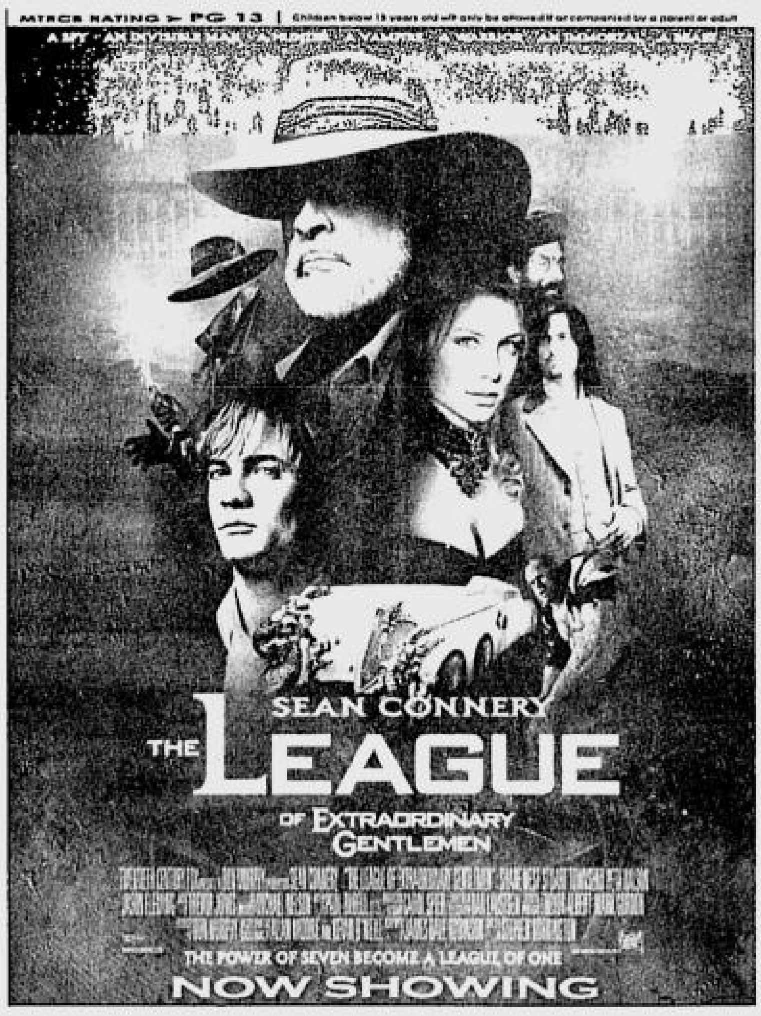

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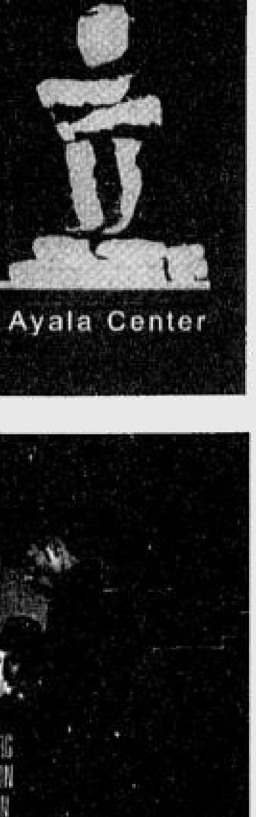

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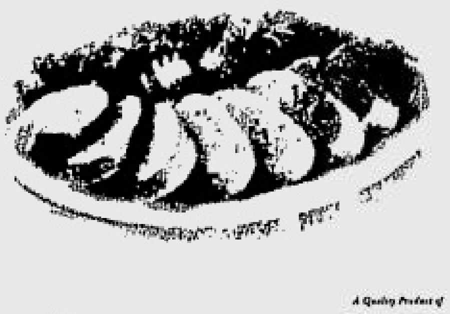

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Filmmaking on the fast lane

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

THE SUCCESS of "2 Fast 2 Furious," "Terminator 3" and other new movies with vivid and thrilling car chase components has prompted producers of action movies to similarly take their filmmaking to the fast lane.

There's more than just visual excitement and danger in operation here. Cars have a sensual appeal to viewers, and their souped-up power can be a turn-on.

In "The Italian Job," even the leading lady (**Charlize Theron**) gets behind the wheel and tempts the gods of speed to do their worst. She drives a Mini, tiny car that turns out to be essential to the movie's plot because it's the perfect vehicle to maneuver in and out of tight spots which the film has a lot of.

Audiences will see only three Minis in the movie. But filming the getaway sequence during the height of rush hour traffic in Los Angeles took 32 Minis. Because of the elaborate stunts in the sequence, some of the cars were rigged for jumps, and others were fitted with armor to withstand numerous bullet hits.

The hard work and expense are worth it, because movies with thrilling car chases usually make a lot of money. For instance, "2 Fast 2 Furious" cost only $38 million, but earned $144 million at the US box office.

Viewers also groove to car chases because they are reminiscent of some video games. Thus, in "The Italian Job," director John Singleton "rehearsed" for making his movie by playing the Gran Turismo video game for hours. And he put the Mitsubishi Evo VII and Nissan Skyline in "The Italian Job" because they figure strongly in the Gran Turismo series.

For her part, Charlize Theron loved doing the car chases in "The Italian Job." She grins, "To have downtown L.A. as your playground—driving fast and doing 360-degree turns—is like being a kid and getting away with murder!"

'The Sopranos'

AT 8 p.m. on Aug. 23, three outstanding sopranos will entertain music buffs at a benefit concert in Philamlife Theater. **Lilac Caña, Thea Tadiar** and **Rachelle Gerodias** each have flourishing solo performing careers here and abroad, so it'll be a special treat to hear them singing together in one show.

They will be joined by pianist **Lourdes de Leon Gregorio**, the Athanaeum String Quartet and the Musikalinangan Philippine Gong and Bamboo Ensemble.

The SinagTala presentation is a fundraiser for the Divine Mercy Mobile Center of Music and Arts Therapy. This unique initiative deserves to be encouraged and supported because it helps special children, adults and seniors, and caters to the needs of persons with disabilities.

It reaches out to people with mental illness, multiple handicaps, autism, Down syndrome, mental retardation, speech impediment and hydrocephalus. In addition, the center serves persons who are deaf, blind and paraplegic.

It seeks to educate, develop and rehabilitate the people it serves, and give them a venue for self-expression through music and art therapy.

The center is being evicted from its current location, so proceeds from "The Sopranos" will help it find a new home. Other needs include a van to carry personnel and instruments for the center's itinerant program, a piano and other instruments to be used by music trainees, and an office computer to train adult disabled people. (The center welcomes volunteers, especially musicians and other artists.)

Call SinagTala at 726-1297. Tickets for "The Sopranos" are also available at Ticketworld (891-5610) and National Bookstore.

About the sopranos: Thea Tadiar studied at the Accademia Internazionale delle Arti and at the Royal Academy of Music in London. She has had concert performances at Hoxton Hall in London and La Consolata Hall in Rome, and is an acclaimed musical-theater talent.

Rachelle Gerodias won the first prize in the Kundiman ng Lahi competition in 1990, and also topped the Mozart aria competition in 1992. She was a scholar at the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, New York, where she received a Master of Music degree in Voice Performance and Literature. In 1995, she won the first prize at the Civic Morning Musicals vocal competition in Syracuse.

'Pagbibinyag'

LAST Aug. 19, the historical play "Pagbibinyag sa Apoy at Dugo" by **Amelia Lapeña-Bonifacio** opened its run at Central Luzon State University. The play is being presented by CLSU's College of Arts and Sciences.

The play is being staged in time for the celebration of National Language Week, the Cry of Balintawak and Araw ng Nueva Ecija. The production's cast is made up of faculty and students of the College of Arts and Sciences. Theater lovers in Nueva Ecija and neighboring provinces are urged to catch a performance of the play, which is being directed by Behn Cervantes as part of his outreach program.

The Douglas dream

By Kathryn Fatima Reyes

DOUGLAS Nierras, choreographer and artistic director of Powerdance Company, which is celebrating its 16th year as the premier jazz and contemporary dance group in the country, dreams a very big dream.

"I dream of a time when any pursuit of artistic excellence would be available on the free channel," says the fiery Nierras. "On a certain day, or two days a week, you could watch a play, a musical or a legitimate dance concert. What I want to see on TV is something that will make you think, feel, get heard, happy, react, not something that you eat your lunch with."

But Nierras admits his dream is far from coming true, considering the growing number of commercial shows that use dancers as mere background entertainment and added attraction in variety show contests. He says he has told several networks about his dream, but so far, only one station agreed to a co-production.

THE DOUGLAS/ A27

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[illegible]	
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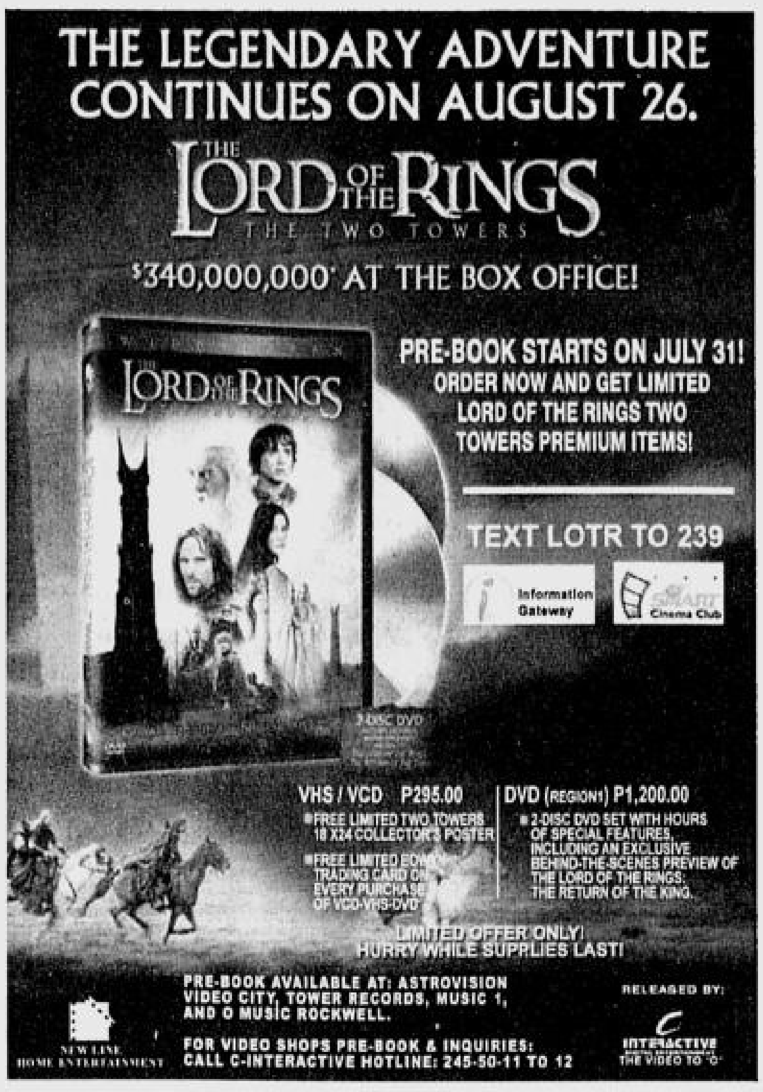
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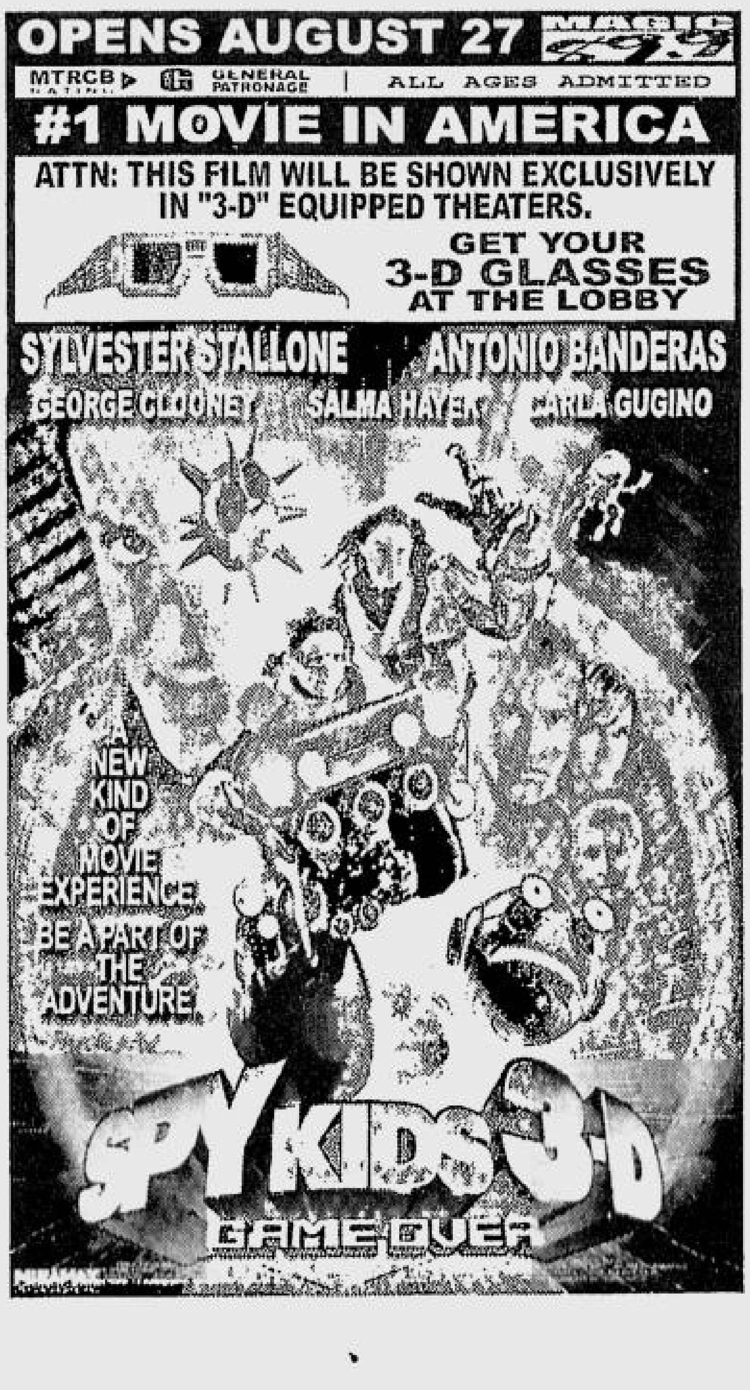
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2 KEKA
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2 NOON AT NGAYON
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2 FINDING NEMO
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3 ALEX AND EMMA 10:50, 1:00, 3:10, 5:20, 7:30, 9:50
4 KEKA 12:25, 2:30, 4:35, 6:45, 9:00
5 ITALIAN JOB 10:10, 12:10, 2:40, 5:10, 7:40, 10:00
6 The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen 11:20, 2:00, 4:40, 7:20, 10:00
7 TOMB RAIDER 2 12:20, 2:40, 5:00, 7:20, 9:40
8 FINDING NEMO 10:45, 1:00, 3.15, 5:30, 7:45, 10:00
9 NOON AT NGAYON 11:00, 1:40, 4:20, 7:00, 9:40
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3 ALEX AND EMMA - 10:15, 12:30, 2:50, 5:10, 7:30, 9:50
4 KEKA - 10:35, 12:45, 2:55, 5:05, 7:15, 9:40
5 VIEW FROM THE TOP - 10:15, 12:05, 2:00, 3:55, 5:50, 7:45, 9:40
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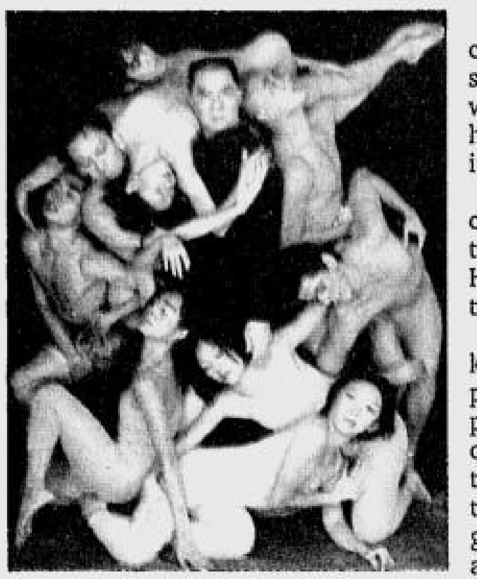
The Douglas dream

From page A23


POWERED-UP Powerdance

"TV is a very bad medium for art because it reduces art to a single dimension," he says. "But even then, for those who have no access to art and who only have access to TV, it could be a start and it could work."

In 1987, after eight years of being a choreographer and artistic director of the Hotlegs dance group, Nierras left Hotlegs and formed Powerdance a mere two weeks later.

"We are here because we want people to know that there is such a thing as contemporary dance," he says. He also wants people to see dance as more than just a series of gyrations or left-to-right movements that do not mean anything. Armed with that vision, Nierras and Powerdance have gained success and recognition here and abroad. They represented the country on several occasions, including the Festival Internacional de Jazz de Mexico in 1990, the Asean Festival of Songs in Singapore in 1989-1994, "East Meets West" in 1995 and the Asia Dance Festival in 1996. In 1999, Powerdance won the international grand prix in modern dance choreography at the 10th Saitama International Creative Dance Concourse in Japan. The company also won the Aliw Awards for best pop/jazz contemporary dance group from 2001 to 2003.

Tomorrow, Douglas Nierras' Powerdance, which has 11 members in all, performs "Love, Powerdance," its anniversary concert, which is a celebration of love, at the Aliw Theater at Star City in the CCP Complex.

"We are hoping to fill up the Aliw Theater, which has 2,750 seats," the dreamer says. "We filled up the CCP Main Theater which has 1,800 seats, we filled up the UP Theater which has 2,000 seats. We've done these."

He says, "More than a celebration of love in all forms, this concert is about giving back to our audience a sense of warmth and connection that we seem to have forgotten because of all the bombings and coup attempts," says Nierras.

"The power of the dance is our family, the way we are, the way we love our dance and the way we create it together. It is a combination of how we love our craft, how we love each other and how we are spiritual about it."

Being spiritual about dance simply means glorifying God through movement, he says. "The best way a singer can pray is by singing. In the same manner, the best way a dancer can pray is by dancing."

Join MTV's 'Mad Dash'...

From page A22

in Pandacan, Pasong Tamo, Visayas Avenue, Mindanao Avenue, Merville, Sumulong Highway, Boni Avenue, Zapote Road, JP Rizal, Concepcion (Marikina), Meralco Avenue cor. J. Vargas, Km. 18 West Service Road (Parañaque), MIA Caltex, Raymundo in Pasig, Ortigas Avenue, Edsa-Pasay Road, Araneta Avenue, Ortigas cor. Wilson, Barangay Malamig (Mandaluyong) and Alabang-Zapote Road; MTV Philippines at the Bonifacio Global City (889-9251); and Wishcraft (635-3754). Deadline for submission of entries is today, Aug. 22, 2003.

A special launch party and concert will be staged at Eastwood City in Libis, at 8 p.m. on Aug. 30, with Velcro, Acafellas and Imago. The finals will be at the SM Megastrip on Sept. 6.

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		11:30 am	2:00 pm	4:30 pm	7:00 pm	9:30 pm
Aug 21 Thursday	GREENBELT 1 CINEMA 1	UZAK Turkey	ANGEL ON THE RIGHT Tajikistan	THE ISLANDERS (Documentary) Philippines	DAYS OF BEING WILD Hong Kong	WELCOME TO DESTINATION SHANGHAI
	GREENBELT 1 CINEMA 2	CITY SHARKS Singapore	THE SON (Le Fils) Belgium	HUBAD SA ILALIM NG BUWAN Philippines	YEAR OF THE DEVIL (Rok Dabla) Czech Republic	24 HOUR PARTY PEOPLE United Kingdom
Aug 22 Friday	GREENBELT 1 CINEMA 1	PONIENTE Spain	RILES (Documentary) Philippines	THE BIG DURIAN Malaysia	ROOM TO LET Malaysia	DAYS OF BEING WILD Hong Kong
	GREENBELT 1 CINEMA 2	WAITING FOR HAPPINESS Mauritania	TUHOG Philippines	BLESSING BELL Japan	TALE OF A NAUGHTY GIRL India	BRIEF CROSSING France
Aug 23 Saturday	GREENBELT 1 CINEMA 1	UZAK Turkey	LETTER TO AN ANGEL Indonesia	PUBLIC TOILET Hong Kong	JELANGKUNG 1 Indonesia	TUSUK JELANGKUNG Indonesia
	GREENBELT 1 CINEMA 2	THE MISSING GUN China	DOLLS Japan	THE BUTTONERS Czech Republic	YEAR OF THE DEVIL (Rok Dabla) Czech Republic	BRIEF CROSSING France
Aug 24 Sunday	GREENBELT 1 CINEMA 1	MAN WITHOUT A PAST Finland	BENDERA Indonesia	DOLLS Japan	LAN YU Hong Kong	DOGVILLE Denmark
	GREENBELT 1 CINEMA 2		CITY OF GOD Brazil	SWIMMING POOL France	BRIEF CROSSING France	EROTIC TALES Germany

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₱10,500 tickets to F4 show

By Marinel R. Cruz

TWO MEMBERS of the wildly popular Taiwanese quartet F4, or Flower Four, and San Cai, all of the chinovela "Meteor Garden," are being brought to Manila to perform in a one-night show called "The Event" on Sept. 13, reportedly at a cost of P25 million.

A source from the concert organizers said the big amount would only pay for the talent fees of Vaness Wu (Mei Zhuo) and Ken Zhu (Xi-Men), two of the members of the now-disbanded F4, and Barbie Xu (San Cai).

The show will be held at the Philsports (Ultra) Football Field in Pasig City.

Vaness, Ken and Barbie are three of the five lead stars of the phenomenal Taiwanese youth show "Meteor Garden," shown on weekdays on ABS-CBN. The series also stars Jerry Yan, who plays Dao Ming Shi, and Vic Zhuo, who is Hua Ze Lei.

Former "That's Entertainment" talent Joed Serrano, now a concert producer through Vigslim Entertainment Production, refused to disclose the exact amount of the talent fees for the Taiwanese stars.

"All I can say is that the (talent fee) is super O.A. *sa mahal,*" said Serrano, who is part of the marketing division of Vigslim Entertainment.

He said tickets to the concert are priced P10,500, P5,000, P3,200, P2,000, P1,000 and P500.

He said "The Event" would also feature Barbie's younger sister, Small S, who is also a celebrity in Taiwan, as well as several Filipino artists.

Barbie, who is called Big S, also belongs to a band named ASOS.

The Philsports Football Field, which can accommodate a crowd of 50,000, was also the venue of Michael Jackson's 1996 concert, as well as the concerts of Phil Collins, Barry Manilow, Stevie Wonder, Gloria Estefan and Earth, Wind and Fire.

"THE EVENT" will feature (clockwise, from above) Vaness, Ken and Barbie

Town council bans Sex Bomb dances

By Hernan P. de la Cruz
PDI Mindanao Bureau

DUMALINAO, Zamboanga del Sur—The town council here passed a resolution prohibiting the performance of Sex Bomb dances, including the very popular "Spageti" dance, during local public celebrations.

The Sex Bomb is a group of shapely young women who became popular as a regular part of the daily noontime show "Eat Bulaga" on GMA 7. They are known for their sexy gyrations when singing their novelty songs.

Councilor Uldarico Tizon, who sponsored the July 23 resolution, said "Sex Bomb dances (border) on sexual perversion" and are bad for children.

Tizon, a long-time public school teacher before he was elected town councilor in 2001, said the movements of the dancers to the tune of the "Spageti Song" were suggestive of sexual acts. "What is ugly is the attire (of the dancers) and (the) movements," he said. "(It's) as if (they're) teaching (minors) the body movements during sex."

He said education and *barangay* officials should instead promote "our cultural and folk dances." He did not put a penalty clause in the resolution, but said he hopes officials would implement it anyway. "Nothing will be lost if they will abide by this resolution, because what we are after is the welfare of our children," he said.

Vice Mayor Frederick Balandra admitted that the people of this town "are deeply influenced by 'Eat Bulaga'" on GMA 7.

Mayor Eutiquio Famor said the resolution was timely, "especially when our society seems to no longer care about our cultural and moral values."

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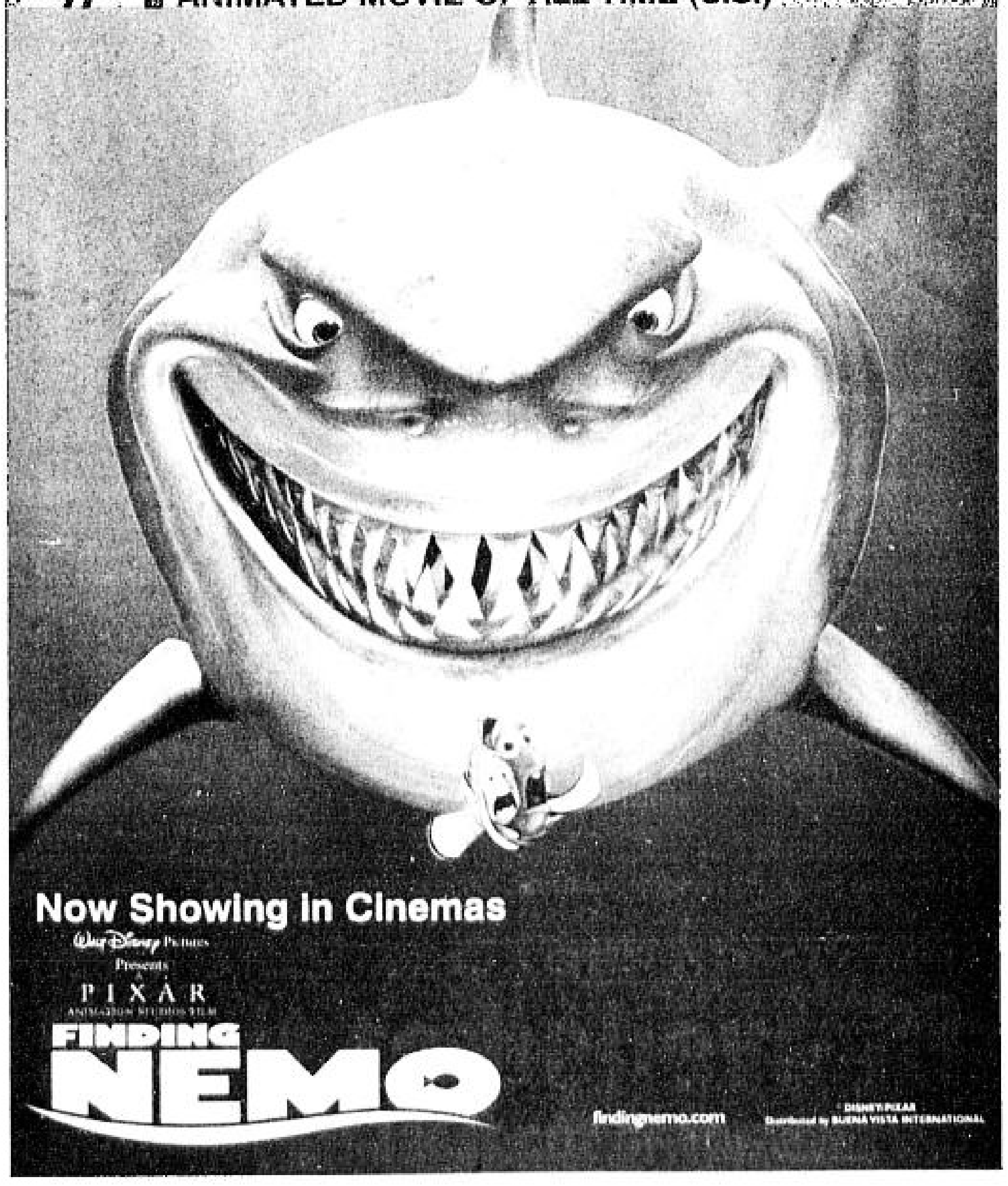
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Transfer of 75% stake in Pavilion Hotel stopped B2

Investments registered by BOI, Peza down 29% in 1st 6 months

By Michelle V. Remo

INVESTMENTS approved by the Board of Investment and the Philippine Economic Zone Authority in the first half of the year declined by 29 percent to P20.49 billion compared with the same period a year ago.

The slump was traced to the 47-percent decline in investments in the second quarter that reversed the 30-percent increase registered from January to March.

The Department of Trade and Industry said the weak investments in the second quarter were attributed to the volatility of the peso and the perceived unstable peace and order situation in the country.

Despite the significant reduction in investments, Trade and Industry Secretary Manuel Roxas II said he remained optimistic, saying the downturn was temporary and that signs showing business confidence in the country were still present.

"The slowdown during the second quarter may just be a temporary holding back of new investment decisions because in reality existing businesses have been investing in additional capital assets during the first semester. The 4.2-percent increase in the importation of capital goods is a strong indication of sustained business activity which may not be totally captured by our regular investment monitoring," Roxas said in a statement.

INVESTMENTS/ B2

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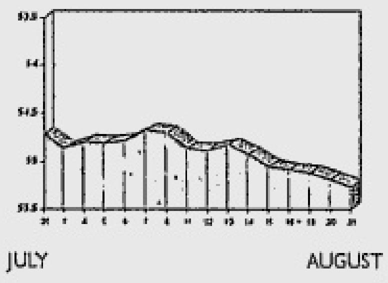

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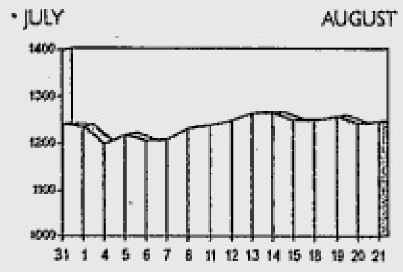
STOCK MARKET



(See stock market report on Page B2)

Stocks end up

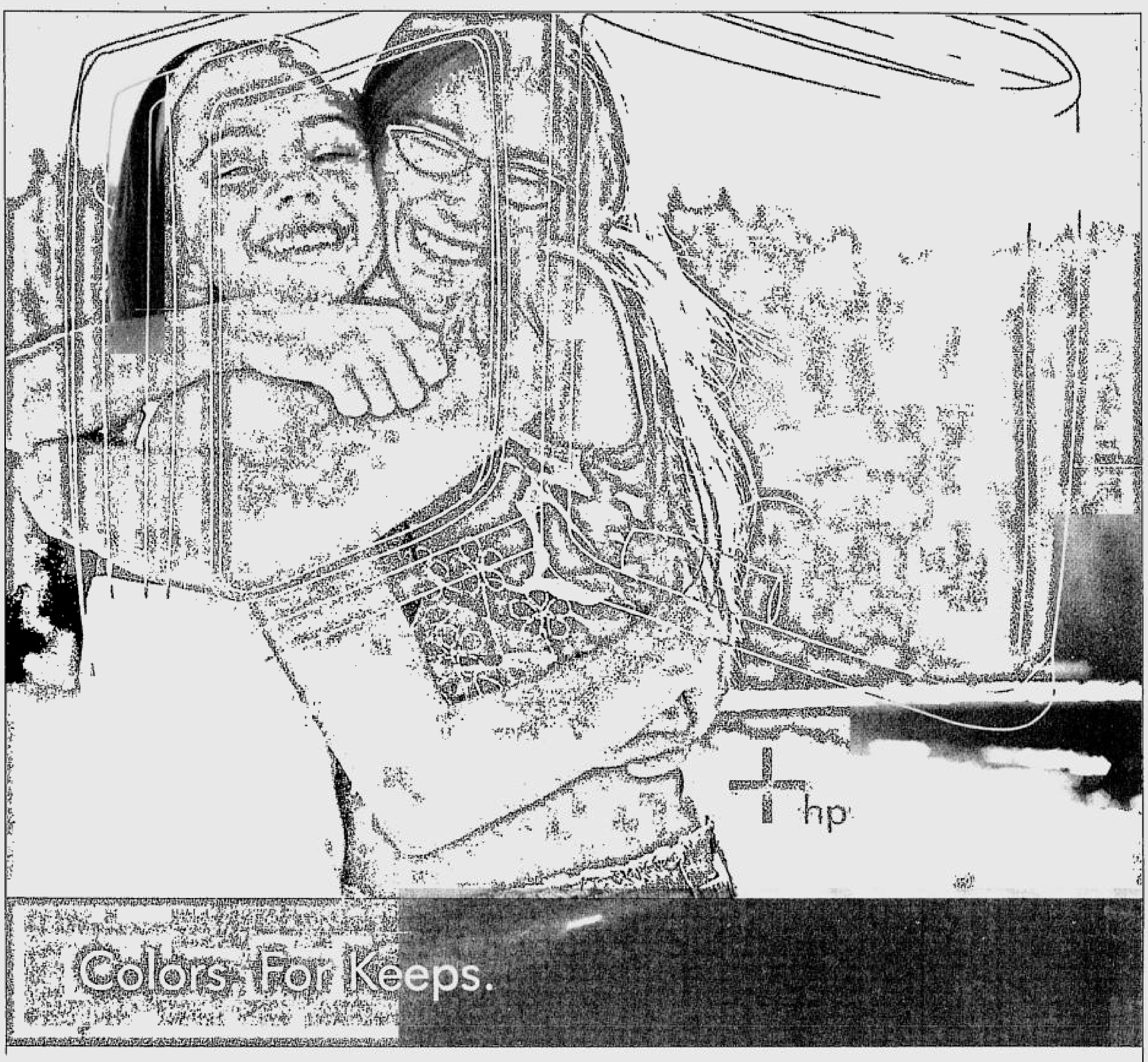
STOCKS ended slightly higher yesterday, helped by continued investor interest in Lopez-family related firms that have regained their luster in recent months on the back of a turnaround in earnings and improved sales, traders said.

The main composite index finished up 2.48 points, or 0.2 percent, at 1,245.34 points. Value turnover was a modest P438 million pesos, from P470.5 million on Wednesday.

The index was off 0.2 percent in a shortened-trading week, with the bourse closed for a public holiday today, but it is up 22.28 percent this year.

"There were selected Lopez family-related issues that helped the broad market to a positive close though overall the market was mixed, with 33 advancers, 29 decliners and 37 counters unchanged," said Lawrence de Leon, a trader at Accord Capital Equities.

"It's still the same recovery story at Benpres and Manila Electric Co. as well as strong earnings at First Philippine Holdings and ABS-CBN Broadcasting," he said. *Reuters*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Primetown Property placed under receiver, gets debt relief

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE MAKATI Regional Trial Court has placed the cash-strapped Primetown Property Group Inc. under receivership, granting the company's own petition for debt relief in order to proceed with its rehabilitation.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange, Primetown said the court had issued an order dated Aug. 15 that, among others, stopped the enforcement of all claims against the company, which is saddled with more than P1 billion in debts.

The RTC ruling said it had found Primetown's petition for rehabilitation "sufficient in form and substance" and appointed lawyer Ariel Salvador Magno as rehabilitation receiver.

"It is ordered that enforcement of all claims against the petitioner, whether for money or otherwise, and whether such enforcement is by court action or otherwise, its guarantors or sureties not solidarily liable with the petitioner, be stayed," the ruling said.

As such, Primetown was prohibited from selling, encumbering, transferring or disposing its assets except in the ordinary course of business as well as from making payment of its liabilities outstanding as of July 2, 2003, the date of the filing of the petition.

All creditors and interested parties, including the Securities and Exchange Commission, were directed to file their comments or opposition to the petition 10 days before the scheduled hearing this Sept. 24.

Last year, Primetown incurred a net loss of P335 million due to the write-off of non-operating assets and liabilities valued at P274 million. It blamed the deterioration of its operations to steep interests on unpaid loans and provision for inventory valuation relating to suspended projects amounting to P76 million.

Primetown owns Century Citadel Inn and Makati Prime Century Tower in Makati City; two condotel projects in Cebu City; the Gold Coast Towers in Mactan, Cebu; the Diamond Head International Resort in Boracay, and the Conservation in Fort Bonifacio.

Primetown has been scouting for prospective strategic investors to help it redevelop its idle real estate and generate cash to settle its debts. It claimed that it had sufficient assets to cover its debts. Apart from the condotels, the company owns a 1.7-hectare mixed-used residential and commercial development project in San Antonio Village in Makati consisting of low-rise townhouses, three high-rise condominium towers and a commercial center.

The company was incorporated in 1989 as an entity engaged in real estate development. Owned by the Yap family, Primetown pioneered the "condotel" (condominium-hotel) model in the country, expanding into other variants such as the "meditel" (medical-hotel) and resortel" (resort condominium-hotel).

Power firm allots $15-45M for Benguet project

By Ronnel W. Domingo

INDEPENDENT power producer Luzon Hydro Corp. said it has earmarked between $15 million and $40 million in capital expenditures for projects that would enable the company to maximize the use of its Bakun power plant in Benguet.

The Aboitiz-owned company wanted to tap ways in which more water could be impounded for the plant's use during the dry season.

Erramon Aboitiz, executive vice president and chief operating officer of Aboitiz Equity Ventures Inc., said in an interview the 70-megawatt Bakun plant could run at only 40 percent of capacity during lean months.

"We can maximize use of the plant if we can get water from additional sources. Hopefully, we may be able to use the plant fully all year round," he said.

But Aboitiz said Luzon Hydro has not pinpointed any of several possible projects due to a lack of agreeable arrangements with the local government.

The executive explained that the Department of Environment and Natural Resources required power companies to enter into memorandums of agreement with local government units concerning such projects.

"We are having difficulty to enter into MOAs because of opposition from local residents," Aboitiz said. "The resistance is mostly due to their lack of understanding about our proposed projects."

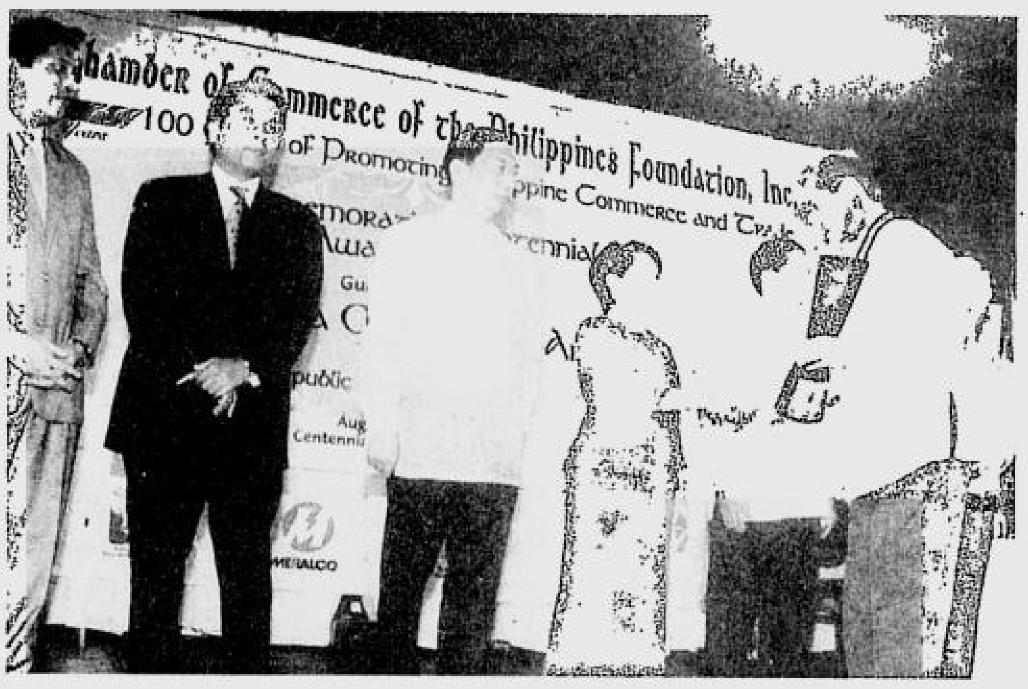
He said, for instance, that farmers think that their own water sources could be depleted if Luzon Hydro drills a tunnel under their areas.

"Some even think we are disguising a mining venture with a water-diversion tunnel project. There is strong resistance against mining projects."

Aboitiz said Luzon Hydro's planned water-impounding projects were much like what was done with the Casecnan irrigation and power project, but on a smaller scale.

The $650-million Casecnan facility diverts excess water from the Casecnan and Taan rivers in Nueva Vizcaya through a 26-kilometer tunnel built under mountains to the 150-megawatt power plant.

The water then goes to the Pantabangan dam, from where irrigation water is supplied to 135, 000 hectares of rice fields.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Meralco president Jesus Francisco receives from President Macapagal-Arroyo a centennial trophy for the Distinguished Enterprise of the Republic Award during the centennial celebration of the Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines Foundation (CCPF) at the Manila Hotel recently. Meralco also received the Strategic Development Partner Award. The citations were in recognition of the company's contribution to the growth of the metropolis. Also in photo are, from left, Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho, Trade and Industry Secretary Maneul Roxas II, incoming CCPF president Francis Chua, CCPF 100th anniversary chair Syke Garcia and outgoing president Rose Teodoro (partly hidden.)

Aboitiz defers IPO of utility unit due to bad economic climate

By Elena R. Torrijos

GIVEN poor market conditions caused by the increasing political mudslinging, the Cebu-based Aboitiz family has postponed plans to list its substantial power interests until after the elections next year.

Erramon Aboitiz, executive vice president and chief operating officer of the Aboitiz's flagship holding company, Aboitiz Equity Ventures Inc., noted that the group would have wanted to list its power businesses on the Philippine Stock Exchange but prevailing market conditions after recent political developments were not conducive for such an undertaking.

He also ruled out an overseas listing or offering given that the group's power operations were all in the Philippines.

AEV officials earlier disclosed plans to undertake an initial public offering for its power business.

Through their holding company, the Aboitiz family has substantial interests in power, banking, transportation, food, construction and real estate.

Its power interests, which are extensive in the Visayas and Mindanao, are held under an AEV unit, Aboitiz Power Corp.

APC's power interests range from distribution, hydro generation, oil-fired generation and consulting.

In distribution, the Aboitiz group counts the following companies: Davao Light and Power Co., Cotabato Light and Power Co., Visayan Electric Co., and San Fernando Electric Light and Power Co.

In hydro, the group's interests include Philippine Hydro Power Corp., Hydro Electric Development Corp., Luzon Hydro Corp. and Northern Mini Hydro Corp.

APC also has oil-fired generation plants under Western Mindanao Power Corp. and Southern Philippines Power Corp.

Transfer of 75% stake in Pavilion Hotel stopped

THE MAKATI Regional Trial Court has issued a preliminary injunction against the transfer of a controlling stake in Manila Pavilion Hotel operator Acesite (Phils.) Hotel Corp. to the Gatchalian family's Waterfront Philippines Inc.

In a ruling dated Aug. 15, Judge Oscar Pimentel restrained Acesite Philippines creditor Equitable PCI Bank from selling 74.89 million shares to WPI. The latter was likewise restrained from interfering or doing any such acts that would disrupt the operations of the Manila Pavilion hotel.

The ruling said the transfer would "probably work in violation of the rights of the plaintiff"—Acesite Ltd., a British Virgin Islands-based company which owns the shares in Acesite Philippines.

Acesite Ltd. owns 74.89 million shares or 75 percent of Acesite Philippines. These shares, however, have been pledged by Acesite Ltd. to secure certain loans granted by Equitable PCI to affiliated companies of the Sino-i.com group.

GATCHALIAN

Acesite officials stressed that they were not aware that the shares pledged to the bank had been foreclosed since the company did not receive any notice of default nor foreclosure from the bank.

The court agreed to place the case under trial in the Philippines—despite Equitable PCI and WPI's petition to dismiss on grounds that Acesite lacked the legal capacity to sue—as the subject shares of stocks were domiciled in the country and all the defendants were doing onshore business.

The order also noted that Acesite Ltd. had sufficiently established that it was complying with its obligations to its creditor Equitable PCI and that the latter was amenable to such a set-up, citing the issuance on Jan. 17, 2003, of a check worth HK$1.56 million in favor of the bank.

"While defendant Equitable PCI Bank has either of the two options to foreclose the mortgage or file an ordinary suit for collection, the act of the defendant Equitable PCI Bank, however, in encashing the check led the plaintiff to believe that defendant opted to choose the second option," the order said.

Sino-i.com is the Hong Kong-based parent company of Acesite Ltd., which earlier increased its stake in Acesite Philippines by buying out its Hong Kong partners for HK$190 million (about P1.5 billion).

"At this point in time, the right of the plaintiff over the subject shares is clear and unmistakable and it cannot be doubted that plaintiff will be disposed of its substantial shares if the act of the defendants will be enjoined," the order said. *Doris C. Dumlao*

Investments . . .

From page B1

Roxas cited the data from the National Statistics Office showing importation of capital goods in the first six months amounted to $7.195 billion. He said the data proved investors were taking a long-term look at the country.

Of the P20.49 billion worth of first-half investments, P11.84 billion or 58 percent was poured into the manufacturing sector. The electricity, gas and water sector was the second biggest beneficiary of investments with P4.7 billion.

The information technology sector followed with P2.3 billion. The biggest approved IT-related investments were customer contact centers, among them the world's largest contact center Convergys, which invested P563 million. Other contact centers that invested in the period were E-performax Contact Center Corp., which invested P509 million, and RHM Teleservices Asia-Pacific Inc., which poured in P507 million.

Japanese businessmen committed the biggest share of investments among foreign investors, pledging P4.8 billion. Businessmen from the United States and Great Britain followed with P4.3 billion and P2.2 billion, respectively.

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of Aug. 21, 2003)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	17.75	17.75	17.75	17.75	2,000
Bank of the Phil. Islands	45.5	45.5	45	45	462,100
Citystate Savings Bank	15.25	15.25	15.25	15.25	2,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	34	34.5	34	34	266,700
First E-Bank Corp.	0.65	0.65	0.65	0.65	90,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	31.5	31.5	31	31.5	14,000
Phil. Savings Bank	27.5	27.5	27.5	27.5	5,000
Security Bank Corp.	19	19	19	19	91,900
Union Bank of the Phil.	25.5	25.5	25.5	25.5	45,200
FINANCIAL SERVICES					
Bankard Inc.	1.38	1.38	1.38	1.38	10,000
Filipino Fund Inc.	5.3	5.3	5.3	5.3	10,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	1630	1630	1630	1630	50
Pci Leasing & Fin. Inc.	1.34	1.34	1.34	1.34	20,000
Sun Life Financial Inc.	1185	1190	1185	1190	710
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	24.25	25	24.25	25	150,300
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	0.61	0.63	0.61	0.63	830,000
Easycall Phils. Inc.-Com	0.33	0.33	0.33	0.33	10,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	625	635	625	630	99,440
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.0525	0.0525	0.0525	0.0525	2,000,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.05	900,000
Liberty Telecoms Holdings	0.16	0.16	0.16	0.16	30,000
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	0.58	0.58	0.58	0.58	2,770,000
Phil. Telegraph & Tel. Co	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	40,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	535	535	530	530	141,390
Ivantage Corp.	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	150,000
Philweb Corp.	0.012	0.013	0.012	0.013	56,700,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	12.5	13.25	12.5	13.25	942,800
Manila Electric Co. B	18.75	20	18.75	19.75	2,292,700
Petron Corp.	1.98	2	1.96	2	1,384,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.36	1.36	1.36	1.36	1,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	3.05	3.1	3.05	3.1	8,524,000
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc.	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	10,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.38	0.38	0.38	0.38	450,000
Republic Glass Hldg. Corp.	1.64	1.64	1.64	1.64	6,000
Union Cement Corp.	0.71	0.75	0.71	0.72	260,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	3	3	2.95	3	365,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	31	31	31	31	30,400
Jollibee Foods Corp.	17.25	17.25	17.25	17.25	427,100
RFM Corp.	0.73	0.73	0.73	0.73	140,000
Swift Food Inc.	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	110,000
San Miguel Corp. A	54	54.5	54	54.5	98,800
San Miguel Corp. B	63	63.5	63	63.5	198,600
Universal Robina Corp.	6	6	6	6	5,000
Vitarich Corp.	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	150,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Atok-Big Wedge Co. Inc	7.7	7.7	7.7	7.7	5,000
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.42	0.42	0.41	0.41	420,000
Abacus Con Res & Hdg B	0.43	0.43	0.43	0.43	10,000
Ayala Corp.	4.55	4.55	4.5	4.55	3,800,000
Alsons Cons. Res. Inc.	0.17	0.17	0.17	0.17	500,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	2.6	2.65	2.6	2.65	61,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.035	0.035	0.035	0.035	2,100,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.0085	0.0085	0.008	0.0085	63,000,000
Anglo Phil Holdings Corp.	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.14	100,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	25,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.59	0.64	0.59	0.62	27,690,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.19	0.19	0.19	0.19	10,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	0.28	0.29	0.27	0.28	1,330,000
Ebecom Holdings Inc.	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	12,000
Fil-Estate Corp.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	20,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	1.06	1.06	1.04	1.06	110,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	17.25	18.25	17.25	17.75	2,094,000
Global Equities Inc.	0.12	0.12	0.115	0.115	1,090,000
Ionics Inc.	1.42	1.44	1.4	1.4	294,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	1.78	1.78	1.78	1.78	8,000
Megaworld Corp.	0.78	0.8	0.78	0.8	1,830,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	3,330,000
Music Corp.	0.37	0.4	0.37	0.38	2,160,000
Prime Orion Phils. Inc.	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	100,000
East Asia Power Res. Corp.	0.125	0.125	0.12	0.12	1,000,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	1	1	1	1	100,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	200,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Corro-Coat Inc.	1.46	1.46	1.46	1.46	84,000
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	1.1	1.1	1.08	1.08	30,000
SPI Technologies Inc.	13.75	13.75	13.75	13.75	4,000
Steniel Manufacturing	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	50,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICES					
Belle Corp.	0.53	0.53	0.51	0.51	7,040,000
Mondragon Intl Phils. Inc.	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.22	310,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	20,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	24.75	25.5	24.75	25.5	239,100
PLDT (10% Pref) Series W	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	600
Philweb Corp. - Warrants	0.0016	0.0016	0.0016	0.0016	5,000,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	6.4	6.4	6.3	6.3	2,639,000
EIB Realty Developers Inc.	0.175	0.18	0.175	0.18	730,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.22	0.225	0.22	0.225	760,000
Edsa Prop. Holdings Inc.	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	150,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1	1	1	1	9,680,000
Highlands Prime Inc.	2.14	2.14	2.14	2.14	50,000
Keppel Phils. Prop. Inc.	1	1	0.9	0.9	150,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.21	190,000
MRC Allied Ind. Inc.	0.175	0.175	0.175	0.175	270,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	5.7	5.7	5.7	5.7	5,193,000
MINING					
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.0044	0.0046	0.0044	0.0044	35,000,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.0046	0.0046	0.0044	0.0044	54,000,000
Omico Corp.	0.0034	0.0034	0.0034	0.0034	20,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	400,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	0.3	0.33	0.3	0.32	220,000
OIL					
Imperial Res.	0.013	0.013	0.013	0.013	14,400,000
Pacifica	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	3,800,000
Vulcan Ind'l	0.165	0.165	0.165	0.165	100,000

DISCLOSURES

APC Group Inc. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on Oct. 1, 2 p.m. at the 42/F of Discovery Suites, Pasig City. Stockholders of record as of Sept. 3 will be entitled to vote at the meeting.

* * *

WELLEX Industries Inc. denied having information that could explain the 40-percent drop in its share price that fell from P0.50 to P0.30 per share.

* * *

RIZAL Commercial Banking Corp. will hold its special stockholders' meeting on Sept. 12, 4 p.m. at the 47/F, Antonio delas Alas Executive Dining Hall of RCBC Plaza, Makati City. Only stockholders of record as of Aug. 15 are entitled to notice of and to vote at the meeting.

* * *

A. BROWN Co. Inc. disclosed the resignation of Gina Maris Libot and Harriet Diputado as human resource manager and finance manager, respectively.

* * *

LIBERTY Telecoms Holdings Inc. moved its annual stockholders' meeting from Aug. 29 to Nov. 28 with record date on Nov. 10.

* * *

WATERFRONT Philippines Inc. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on Sept. 27, 10 a.m. at the Waterfront Cebu City Hotel. Stockholders of record as of Sept. 5 will be entitled to vote at the meeting.

* * *

HENRY Brimo retired as director of **Philodrill Corp.** Walter Brown was elected to replace him.

* * *

ARMANDO Medina was appointed member of **Bankard Inc.**'s executive and audit committees.

* * *

EASYCALL Communications Philippines Inc. will hold a special stockholders' meeting on Sept. 17 with record date on Aug. 19. ***Compiled by Maricar D. Tolosa, PDI Research***

CURRENCIES

August 21, 2003 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.898957	1.000000	55.169000
Japan	Yen	0.007610	0.008465	0.467000
United Kingdom	Pound	1.433747	1.594900	87.989000
Hongkong	Dollar	0.115276	0.128233	7.074500
Switzerland	Franc	0.648131	0.720981	39.775800
Canada	Dollar	0.641562	0.713674	39.372700
Singapore	Dollar	0.516761	0.574845	31.713600
Australia	Dollar	0.594038	0.660808	36.456100
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.384755	2.652801	146.352400
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.239722	0.266667	14.711800
Brunei	Dollar	0.515280	0.573197	31.622700
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000107	0.000119	0.006600
Thailand	Baht	0.021599	0.024027	1.325500
UAE	Dirham	0.244774	0.272287	15.021800
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.112400	61.370000
Argentina	Peso	0.309986	0.344828	19.023800
Brazil	Real	0.299552	0.333222	18.383500
Denmark	Kroner	0.134494	0.149611	8.253900
India	Rupee	0.019662	0.021872	1.206700
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.236599	0.263193	14.520100
Mexico	New Peso	0.083014	0.092345	5.094600
New Zealand	Dollar	0.529671	0.589206	32.505900
Norway	Kroner	0.120734	0.134304	7.409400
Pakistan	Rupee	0.015580	0.017331	0.956100
South Africa	Rand	0.122412	0.136171	7.512400
Korea	Won	0.000765	0.000851	0.046900
Sweden	Kroner	0.108164	0.120322	6.638000
Syria	Pound	0.021404	0.023810	1.313600
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.026286	0.029240	1.613100
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000564	0.000627	0.034600

The sting is on Ping

COCKTALES

Victor C. Agustin

WHOA! It looks like Sen. Panfilo Lacson had been taken for a ride, a sting operation more embarrassing than the Ador Mawanay caper pulled on ex-spy chief Victor Corpus.

We have it on good authority that the "Jose Pidal" account in Union Bank has been closed since August 2001, contrary to the Lacson claim that that account contained so many millions as of end-July this year.

What is more embarrassing was the revelation from Bank of the Philippine Islands that not only did it not have any Jose Pidal account as alleged by Lacson, the BPI branch that the presidentiable claimed where the Pidal account was being maintained had been closed four years ago!

Why this elementary fact-checking negligence escaped the former national police chief—an ex-intelligence chief at that—simply taxes the imagination. And to think that the Lacson camp has a bank president, Bank of Commerce's Raul de Mesa, and a former central bank spokesperson, columnist Rodolfo Romero, advising the presidentiable on banking issues.

The next question is, if the Jose Pidal account does not exist in BPI and had been closed in Union Bank since August 2001, where does that leave the Copa group of Pastor Saycon, Boy Montelibano and presidential adviser Jose Cojuangco in their sudden switch to Lacson and their claim that the more P500 million "kickback" on the Diosdado Macapagal highway went to the Jose Pidal account, the "missing link," to use Saycon's word, in the kickback puzzle.

Clue? The DM Blvd. scandal broke out in 2002.

Squeezing Cuisia

JOSE Cuisia is not running for reelection on Monday's Manila Polo Club elections, but the former central bank governor himself has become an electoral issue.

One candidate for the Polo Club board, Tomas Toledo, has been scoring Cuisia, an incumbent director, and the insurance coverage of the club facilities to rack up "pogi" points for his campaign.

Cuisia, for those who were born yesterday, is now the chair/CEO of Philamlife, which last year secured an extension of the insurance coverage for the polo club.

What has been left out in the Toledo spin is that Philamlife has been providing the insurance coverage of the club since 1990, on the strength of the recommendation of the club's insurance broker, Gotuaco and Del Rosario.

Del Rosario happens to refer to Albert del Rosario, our ambassador to Washington.

Besides Toledo, five others are seeking election for the four vacancies in the board. The five are iBank president Ramon Sy, Sabin Aboitiz, Nestlé chair Juan Santos, former Finance Secretary Roberto de Ocampo, and retired ad executive Roger Davies.

Crossed lines

THE REHABILITATION of Bayan Telecommunications has suffered a disconnection.

The court-appointed receiver, accountant Conchita Manabat, has declined her appointment.

Manabat's accounting firm is the local correspondent of Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu and her DTT partners, according to the grapevine, had informed her that a number of the overseas Bayantel bondholders/creditors now pressing their claims against Bayantel happen to also be clients of DTT.

While her appointment may not fall within the local conflict-of-interest rules governing corporate rehabilitation, the DTT partners have apparently advised Manabat otherwise.

Heard through the grapevine

KRIS Aquino was one of the registered guests at Oakwood when the rebel soldiers took over the hotel complex.

The actress, before mischievous tongues start wagging, had been staying at room 2001 since July 13, more than a week before the rebel takeover.

(Cocktales may be reached by e-mail at cocktales_pdi@yahoo.com or at cocktales_pdi@hotmail.com.)

DESPITE SBMA-ERC ROW

Aboitiz remains keen on Subic power project

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE ABOITIZ group's Subic Enerzone Corp. said it was standing firm on a planned P350-million investment in power distribution despite a row between the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority and the Energy Regulatory Commission on which agency should regulate the utility.

Erramon Aboitiz, executive vice president and chief operating officer of Aboitiz Equity Ventures, said in an interview the group had no plans of canceling its investment project in Subic.

"We are very excited about this (project) since the first day," Aboitiz said. "(But) we cannot move until the regulation issue is resolved."

The issue is something that had to be settled between SBMA and ERC, the executive added.

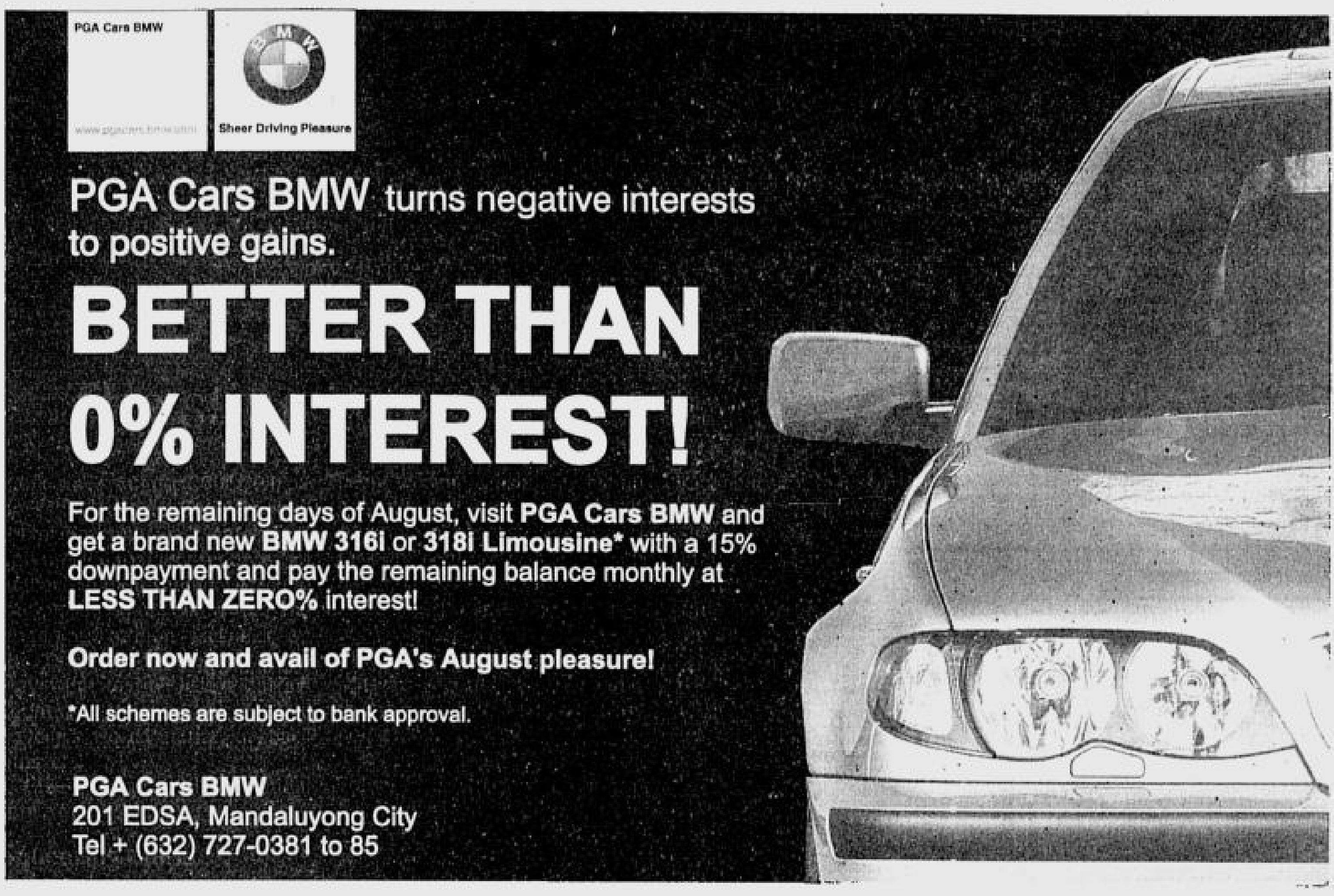
The two agencies are invoking their authority over power distribution through the laws that created them—SBMA under RA 7227 and ERC under RA 9136.

Aboitiz said Enerzone won the contract to take over Subic's distribution utility when it offered to collect only 59 centavos per kilowatt-hour over the next five years from the current P1 per kWh.

"We are offering a reduction of 40 centavos per kWh and I think this is very good news for consumers. It's a very good contract."

Aboitiz said the company was able to offer low prices based on their projections that electricity demand in Subic would grow by 6-8 percent a year.

"Aside from that, basing on our experience with our other distribution businesses, we are a low-cost operator. We are going to make money through that and a growing market."



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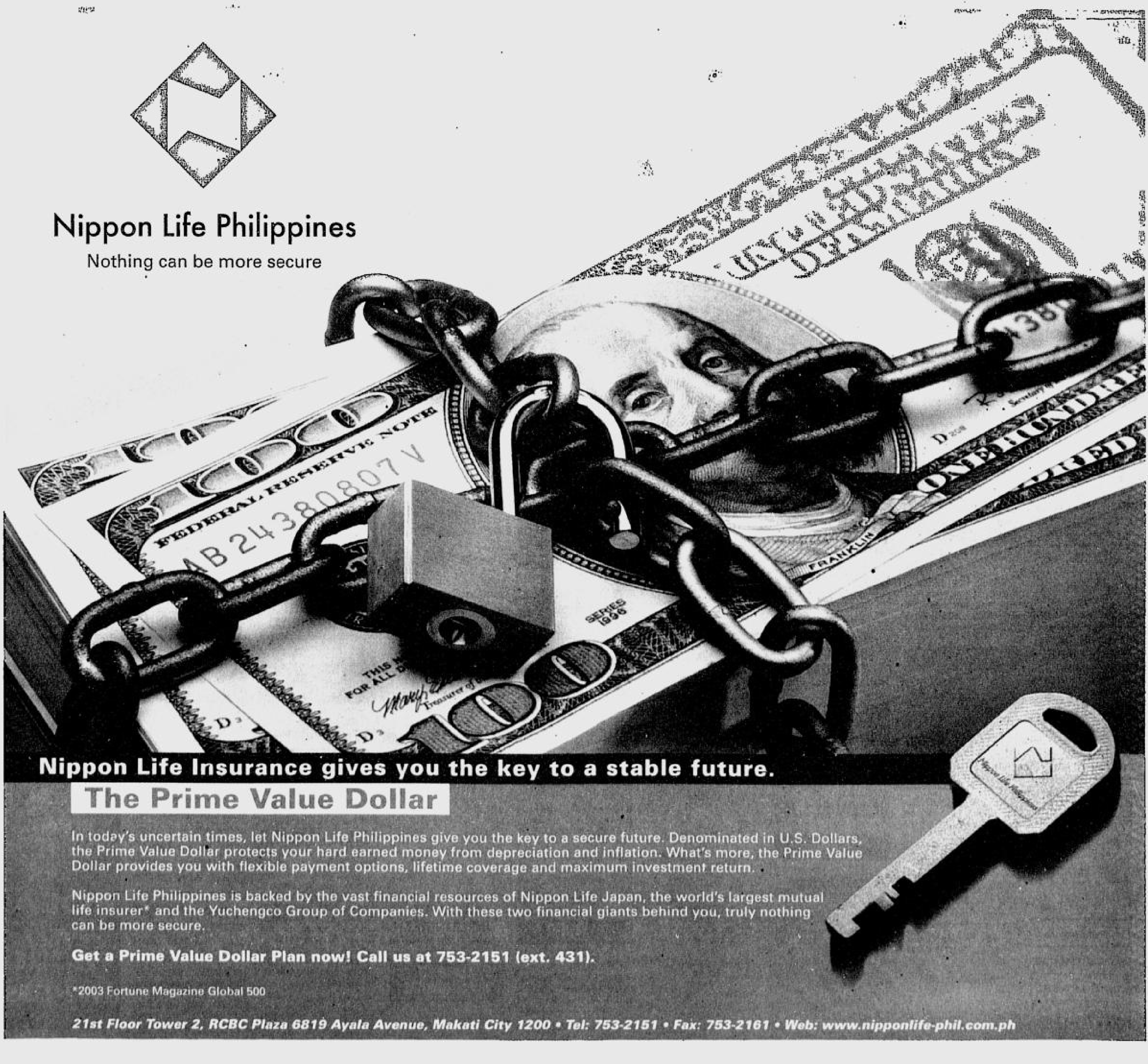

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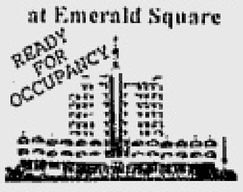

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LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is given that the estate of the late ANTERO DUCIL was extrajudicially settled with waiver of shares among the heirs per Doc 03 Page 1 Book V Series of 2003 bef. Notary Public Jennifer Sta. Ana of Mkna City (PDI-Aug 8,15 & 22, 2003)

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late Remedios Noguera was self-adjudicated by Angelita San Agustin of Manila per Doc.#38, Page #8, Book #367, Series of 2003 of Notary Public L. Lawas-Yuto (PDI-Aug. 22, 29, Sept. 5, 2003)

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late Rodrigo F. Galvez was adjudicated to Rosa A. Galvez per Doc. 148, Page 30, Book XIV, Series of 2003 before Notary Public Santiago D.R. Agdeppa of Quezon City.
(PDI-Aug. 8, 15, 22, 2003)

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INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Commission on Elections (COMELEC), pursuant to the mandate of Republic Act 8436, invites interested manufacturers, dealers or suppliers to apply for eligibility and to bid for the supply and delivery of Carbonless paper (continuous form) with security fibers for the printing of the computer generated election results, with an approved budget of ONE HUNDRED THIRTY FIVE MILLION PESOS (Php 135,000,000.00).

Bid documents maybe obtained starting August 25, 2003 during office hours from the Bids and Awards Committee Secretariat, 5th floor Palacio del Gobernador, Intramuros, Manila, upon payment at the Cash Division, Commission on Elections, in cash or cashiers check, payable to the Commission on Elections, of a non-refundable amount of TEN THOUSAND PESOS (Php10,000.00).

A pre-bid conference is scheduled on **August 29, 2003,** at 10:00 am at the Session Hall, Commission on Elections, Postigo St., Intramuros, Manila. Should there be questions on the bid documents, bidders are required to submit their queries in writing to the BAC Secretariat prior to the scheduled Pre-bid Conference.

Deadline for submission to the BAC of applications for eligibility and bid envelopes shall be at the Session Hall, Commission on Elections, Postigo St., Intramuros, Manila on **September 9, 2003** at 9:00 a.m. Bid opening shall be at 2:00 p.m. of the same date.

The COMELEC reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive any formality defect contained therein, and accept the lowest complying and responsive bid that is most advantageous to the Commission. Likewise, it reserves the right to review the qualifications of the bidders after the bidding and before the contract is executed. Should such review uncover any misrepresentation made in the eligibility statements, or any changes in the bidder's situation to materially downgrade the substance of such statements, the COMELEC shall disqualify the bidder upon due notice, without any obligation whatsoever for any expenses or losses that may be incurred by it in the preparation of its bid.

(Sgd.) **EDUARDO D. MEJOS**
Chairman
Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI–August 22, 2003)

Kagawaran ng Ugnayang Panlabas
Department of Foreign Affairs

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
2330 Roxas Boulevard, Pasay City, Metro Manila
Prequalification, Bids and Awards Committee

INVITATION TO BID

The Department of Foreign Affairs-Prequalification, Bids and Awards Committee (DFA-PBAC) is inviting interested bidders to apply for eligibility and bid for the following service contracts:

A. PEST CONTROL SERVICE CONTRACT (re-publication)
B. PHOTOCOPIER LEASE SERVICE CONTRACT
C. SECURITY SERVICE CONTRACT

All interested bidders may avail of bid documents from **25 August - 8 September 2003**, upon submission of a Letter of Intent addressed to the undersigned and upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Five Hundred Pesos (Php 500.00) at the DFA-PBAC Secretariat Office of the Undersecretary for Administration, 12th Floor, DFA Building, Roxas Boulevard, Pasay City, Tel. # 834-4066. Prequalification documents must be submitted to the DFA-PBAC Secretariat on or before the dates specified below for each service. Applications for eligibility shall be evaluated using the "PASS/FAIL" criteria and only the companies prequalified by the DFA-PBAC shall be allowed to submit bids. Prebid conferences may be held upon determination by the DFA-PBAC for purposes of clarifying certain issues.

ACTIVITY	PEST CONTROL (re-publication)	PHOTOCOPIER LEASE	SECURITY SERVICE
Submission of Prequal Docs.	24 Sept. 2003, 1700H (deadline)	25 Sept. 2003, 1700H (deadline)	26 Sept. 2003, 1700H (deadline)
Submission of Sealed Bids	22 Oct. 2003, 1400H (deadline)	23 Oct. 2003, 1400H (deadline)	24 Oct. 2003, 1400H (deadline)
Opening of Sealed Bids	22 Oct. 2003, 1500H	23 Oct. 2003, 1500H	24 Oct. 2003, 1500H

DFA-PBAC reserves the right to reject any or all bids without offering any reasons, and to waive any deficiencies and required formalities embodied therein. DFA-PBAC assumes no obligations whatsoever to offset the expenses and/or losses the bidder may have incurred in the preparation of the bids. DFA-PBAC further reserves the right to declare a failure of bid, and/or not to award the contract, and makes no assurances that all contract shall be entered into as a result of this invitation.

(Sgd.) **FRANKLIN M. EBDALIN**
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(PDI – August 22 & 29, 2003)

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RP to resume exportation of papaya to Japan

THE COUNTRY will resume exportation of solo papayas to Japan this month after a 10-month suspension.

Japan stopped importing solo papaya from the Philippines in October last year after a shipment was found infested with fruit-flies.

The country has been exporting $150 million worth of solo papayas to Japan yearly.

The Bureau of Plant Industry said the Japan Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF) had declared Philippine solo papayas free from fruit-fly infestation and lifted the suspension following an inspection done by a team sent by the MAFF.

BPI director Blo Umpar Adiong said the Japanese team was sent to the country to validate quarantine reports of the bureau on these products.

In October last year, the Japanese government seized a shipment of 35,150 kilos of solo papayas from the Philippines, exported by Dole Tropifresh, due to fruit-fly infestation.

An investigation conducted by the bureau showed that the problem stemmed from a faulty vapor heat treatment plant, one of the three used to fumigate fruit exports to Japan, which had failed to detect the fruit-fly infestation of that shipment. The two other VHT plants were found in good condition.

The Department of Agriculture said exporters of solo papayas could use the two other VHT plants in treating their exports to Japan.

Adiong said stricter measures and procedures were put in place to ensure that fruit-fly infestation would not happen again in the future. However, these measures will still have to be approved by the MAFF.

In the meantime, the Japanese government also banned earlier the entry of Philippine okra allegedly due to high pesticide residue content.

The ban was in line with the amended Food Sanitation Law of Japan which calls for a total ban of shipments found to exceed the acceptable levels of pesticide residue.

The law gives Japanese government inspectors the authority to ban an entire import shipment of products found to contain excessive chemical residue.

Okra exports from the Philippines were only allowed entry to Japan again in November last year.

Food security, community responsibility

By Ernesto M. Ordoñez

COMMENTARY

TONY Meloto, a moving force behind Gawad Kalinga of the Couples for Christ (CFC) and a recent Lux in Domino awardee for personifying the Ateneo ideal of "Man for Others," was amazed. He had not known that a small packet of seeds ordered for only P10 from UPLB's Institute of Plant Breeding by the Department of Agriculture (DA) could feed nine persons (or one and a half families) nutritious vegetables for a whole year.

Background

Last year, a disillusioned columnist wrote how he found hope when he visited the Gawad Kalinga (GK) depressed communities. Where before there were dirty shanties with unmotivated residents, he now saw clean and brightly painted little houses. The cheerful colors seemed to have rubbed off on the GK residents. In the new pleasant surroundings, the incidence of crime, drugs and despair decreased substantially.

When I visited the same site with Tony Meloto, accompanied by Maria and Boy Montelibano, I was similarly impressed. However, being a very low-income community, the GK residents were generally malnourished. On the way to the site, we saw idle lands where vegetables could have been planted. In the GK homes, we saw space where vegetables could likewise be planted in pots or cans.

It was then that I showed the packet of certified vegetable seeds, which the DA had distributed to 300,000 impoverished coconut farmers whose copra price had dropped from P10 to P4 per kilo. When Mr. Meloto proposed that the DA give the GK residents the same seeds, I suggested we find out first whether a family member would give up a P12 canned soft drink to get P10 worth of certified vegetable seeds that would feed his family for an entire year. The extra vegetables, if sold, would provide an opportunity for additional livelihood income. The GK residents said they would gladly do so.

If this were done, the distribution and reach of these certified seeds would not be limited to the scarce DA budget. Not only would there be more people increasing the quantity of their food intake, the high nutritional value of vegetables would also improve the quality of their diets. Since then, Mr. Meloto has been discussing food security issues with Gawad Kalinga's point man in the DA, fellow CFC member and National Corn Program coordinator Art Salazar, and regional executive director Dennis Araullo, who coordinates urban agriculture activities in Metro Manila and Region 4.

The big picture

On global food security, Sartaj Aziz, Pakistan's former minister of agriculture, finance and foreign affairs, said, "The developed countries are providing subsidies totaling $350 billion a year to their agriculture sector which is almost six times the total Official Development Assistance (ODA) provided to developing countries. The developing countries cannot compete in the international market with these subsidized agricultural exports from the developed countries." He added, "The flow of ODA which was partly a compensation for the inequities of the global system, instead of moving toward the internationally accepted target of 0.7 percent of GDP of donor countries, has been declining to less than 0.2 percent of GDP."

With an uneven playing field where developed countries have not phased out their agriculture subsidies and yet expect us to bring down our agricultural tariffs (which is why the Alyansa Agrikultura wants a freeze on agricultural tariffs for 2004), and with very scarce government resources for agriculture (which the Alyansa wants increased following the AFMA law which it says has not been done), there should be a paradigm shift in the way our food security is handled. The government does not have enough resources to rely on cash subsidies for food security, especially with the ODA drying up. Communities should empower themselves and become transformational in taking the main responsibility for this. They should combat the culture of government patronage dole-outs, and instead ask government to provide working and profitable models, technologies, and mechanisms that will enable them to produce more food and more income.

Future direction

In the case of rice, this proved successful. In 2001, with a P150-million budget subsidy cut, certified rice seed use more than doubled from 700,000 to 1.5 million hectares. This resulted in record rice production and income levels. It was a significant change from the 300,000 certified seed use that remained stagnant from 1986 to 1999 when government subsidies were more relied upon.

The same argument can be given for the vegetable seed situation. Instead of subsidizing seed distribution that will result in very limited reach because of scarce resources, the government should instead put more emphasis on working with the private sector in promoting these seeds. Since the private sector will profit from both selling and using these seeds, the result will be wider use and sustainable growth. Agriculture director Richard Cochlea has made such a paradigm shift. He holds himself accountable not only for the post-harvest facilities he placed with government subsidy as he used to before. He now also targets a number of facilities that will be put up by the private sector without government subsidy. Through all this, the empowered transformational communities must take the lead. For in the final analysis, it is the private sector we must rely on for true food security.

(The author is chair of Agriwatch, a private sector initiative, former undersecretary of agriculture and trade, and chair/secretary, Presidential Flagship Programs and Projects. For inquiries and suggestions, e-mail agriwatchphil@yahoo.com or telefax: 851-6635)

NTC says cable TV rules to enhance competition

By Abigail L. Ho

THE NATIONAL Telecommunications Commission said the soon-to-be-issued guidelines governing the cable television industry would be unbiased and compliant with the Constitution, contrary to the claims of program providers.

In an interview Wednesday evening, NTC chief Armi Jane Borje said all the provisions contained in the draft rules were aimed at enhancing competition in the market and that none of them was seen to hamper the growth of the cable television industry.

"This is why balance is really necessary. The Constitution mandates that you should not engage in activities that promote monopoly or in anti-competitive practices. But we also don't plan to trample on the right to contract," she said.

Under the draft memorandum circular, parties wanting to have exclusive contracts with each other should first seek the NTC approval.

The draft rules also made it clear that program providers should not discriminate against certain cable operators.

Apart from regulating exclusive contracts and protecting cable firms from discrimination, the draft circular is also seen to protect cable operators from arbitrary program pullouts as well as termination of contracts for no apparent reasons.

Safeguards will be set up to prevent such problems, including the mandatory submission and review of contracts by the NTC and the registration of program providers with the regulatory body.

These provisions in the draft rules are exactly what the Cable and Satellite Broadcasting Association of Asia (CASBAA), Motion Picture Association (MPA) and some cable operators are contesting.

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Editor Aries Espinosa

Nestlé 'Greening the Supply Chain' holds 8th Forum

PARTICIPANTS from 62 firms, which are among the approximately 300 business partners of Nestlé Philippines Inc (NPI), attended the company's "Greening the Supply Chain (GSC)" Business Partners' 8th Environment Forum held at the Nestlé Center recently.

The Nestlé GSC program is a continuing initiative in which the company works with business partners in setting up their own Environmental Management Systems. The program, since it was launched three years ago, has yielded concrete results, in particular increased efficiencies in operations and the use of resources, leading to cost savings among various partners. GSC has demonstrated that smaller enterprises can be at par with bigger ones in contributing to environmental protection. The program is currently involved with the second batch of business partners.

At the forum, Pedro N. Dy-Liacco, NPI director of communications, underscored in his opening remarks the important role of the business partners in making GSC a successful reality, as recognized in various awards and citations. He also noted the program's multiplier effect, as seen in the increasing number of partners participating in GSC since its launch.

Seven reports were shared at the forum, starting with Rightpak's Edgar Ramilo, who spoke on the benefits of his company's shift to high-grade boiler fuel. NPI environmental officer Jess Reyes gave updates on pending legislation and regulatory environmental initiatives. NPI environmental manager Arnel Nunez gave a lecture and workshop on practical energy auditing that can be applied in the home. Andy Querubin, president of Technical Experts on Environmental Management, provided updates and guidelines on how to facilitate Environmental Compliance Certificate (ECC) applications. Asia-Pacific Roundtable for Cleaner Production (APRCP) chair and president Dr. Livvy Castillo made a presentation on global compact. NPI environmental manager Obet Feliciano reviewed the overall program status and direction of GSC for the year, and how business partners can achieve their respective goals.

The participants also shared their specific experiences and success stories, such as cost savings gained by implementing their Environmental Management Systems. In his closing remarks, NPI technical director John Jessup urged participants to practice sustainable learning, spreading what they learn so that the impact of caring for the environment can be better felt, as in countries where achievements in protecting the environment at first seemed impossible.

NPI DIRECTOR of communications Noy Dy-Liacco (inset) stresses the important role of participants in the 8th Nestlé 'Greening the Supply Chain' Business Partners' Environment Forum. He said they are key players in making the GSC program success, contributing to environmental preservation while achieving better efficiencies in their respective operations and the use of resources, for greater business profitability.

VAZPAVE 'PEDESTRIANIZES' RIZAL AVENUE

The expertise of Vazcom Corp. has been tapped to enhance the Rizal Avenue Pedestrianization project of Manila Mayor Lito Atienza using Vazpave wavy profile, the new trend in quality paving that brings rustic realm and panoramic paragons, which is in line with the latest enhancement of Roxas Boulevard. The project is spearheaded by the city government of Manila. The Vazpave wavy profile is another Filipino innovation of Vazcom Corp. For inquiries, call 412-8290 to 94 or 362-4395.

ATENEO CAGE STARS GO FOR US COLLEGE COLLECTION

Ateneo basketball stars and campus heartthrobs Andrew Cruz and Chris Quimpo, members of the 2003 UAAP champion Ateneo Blue Eagles basketball team, have been tapped as official endorsers of the US College Collection. Designed to keep up with the demands of an active lifestyle, the casual sports wear collection is a growing product line consisting of high quality but reasonably priced apparel and accessories. Exclusively distributed in the Philippines by Global Brands, the US College Collection is available in selected branches of Toby's, Royal Sporting House, Planet Sports, The Athlete's Foot and other leading sports stores nationwide. With Cruz and Quimpo are Mitch Lim, US College marketing manager and Bianca Garcia of Leo Burnett Manila.

BROADBAND UPGRADES TO 2ND GENERATION WIRELESS SYSTEM

Broadband Philippines Inc, a full telecommunications provider offering local and international voice, data and Internet services, has recently finished the upgrade of its broadband wireless network. The upgrade involves the commissioning of a 2nd generation point-to-multipoint broadband wireless system, the first-ever installation in the country. The new broadband network is expected to provide its customers with a more robust and reliable service at higher bandwidth capacity. Aside from the premier business areas of Makati and Ortigas, Broadband Philippines also has the opportunity to better serve the telecommunication needs of Manila and Quezon City business districts. Shown are, from left, Chuck Locsin, chief technical officer, May Villa, vice president for corporate sales and customer service, Jonathan Zarate, product manager for corporate services, and Renor Baluga, head of project implementation.

Toolec to showcase high-end power sources

HIGH-END inverter welding and plasma cutting power sources will be the main focus of Toolec Inc during this year's PDMAEC 2003 exhibit. Today's prohibitive energy cost and the high expectation of customers, as far as getting high-quality welded joints, dictate the use of welding and plasma cutting power sources. Inverter power sources are designed to fill-in cost saving requirements of today's industries. Extremely powerful yet portable inverter power sources will be featured, such as Miller's Maxstar 200DX, CST 250, XMT 304 CC/CV, and Thermal Dynamics Cutmaster Plasma Cutting Systems will be the focal point of Toolec's exhibit.

Precision TIG welders such as Miller's Maxstar 200DX and CST 250 can provide the necessary output for welding thin sheets of carbon and stainless steel. For example, the Maxstar 200 can be set as low as 1 ampere while the CST 250 can be set to 5 amperes.

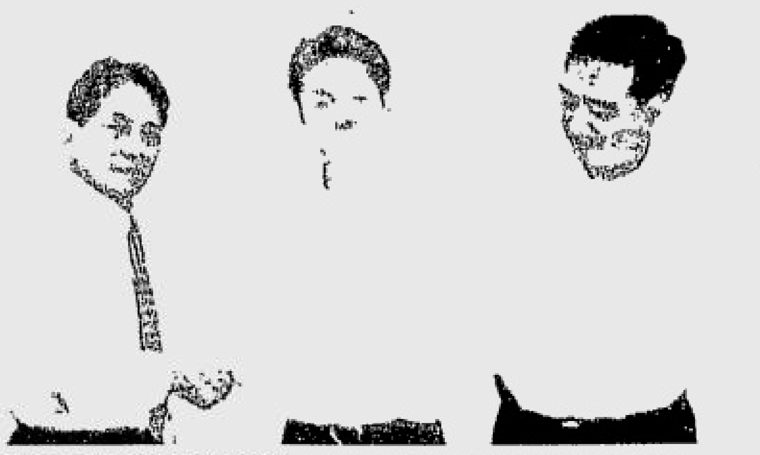
The unique design feature of Miller's inverter power sources is its ALT or Auto-Line and Auto-Link technology. ALT or Automatic-Line provides state-of-the-art flexibility by automatically connecting to 120-460 VAC, single or three-phase power without removing the covers to relink the power source. Now the user is no longer concerned whether he has the correct machine for the shop or the jobsite. He can practically use any available single or three phase input power whenever and wherever.

Inverter welders on aluminum will also excite the welding enthusiasts when they see the Programmable Pulse welder series. These are Programmable multi-process welders for all steel and alloy materials. The unique advantages of this system is its user-friendly design where the welder is no longer concerned whether the machine is set to the correct parameters in relation to the thickness of the materials to be welded. He only has to choose the programmed parameters for the type of steels and alloy and gas type plus the wire size, once these are set or chosen, everything will be automatically set or controlled by the power source. No more guesswork, and the resulting weld quality will be consistent.

All people who are in the metal-working industry are all invited to see Toolec's booth to see the above machines. Product engineers are in the booth to receive all inquiries.

THE SECRET IS IN THE TASTE

Ichizen Japanese Food and Café, a well-known Japanese restaurant that pioneered and popularized Japanese food in the university area in Legarda and at University of Santo Tomas in P. Noval, Espana, Manila, proudly maintains its consistency in food quality by providing rigid training to its kitchen staff. From time to time, Ichizen's kitchen and dining crew, as shown, undergo written and practical exams to make sure they adhere to the standards in food preparation and customer service set forth by the management. Ichizen is located at 2057 Legarda corner San Rafael, Manila (309-4080) and at P. Noval (309-4276).



APEX ADVERTISING BAGS RED BULL ACCOUNT

Apex Advertising Associates Inc kicks off its 20th year with a list of new advertising accounts, one of which is Red Bull Barako Coffee Drink. Apex Advertising has been tasked to provide the advertising and marketing support for the product starting with the 'Barako Para sa Barako' campaign. Shown from left are Apex Advertising Associates president and general manager Rene D. Rodriguez, Energy Food and Drinks Inc product manager Jamieson F. Chua and Apex Advertising business development manager Antonio Arespacochaga after their contract signing.

ProductFILES

Precious Moments for your sentiments

EXPRESS your heartfelt sentiments without saying a word-only through Precious Moments. The Precious Moments famous collection now has its exclusive line of school supplies, notebooks, coloring books, and photo albums. Spread endearing messages of love, caring, and sharing only from Precious Moments. Precious Moments collection is now available at leading bookstores and stationery shops nationwide, and is exclusively distributed by Merit Inc.

Tony Roma's Caribbean Carnival

COME celebrate Tony Roma's Caribbean Carnival-an exotic taste of the Caribbean with four sizzling entrees-Carnival Shrimp, Roasted Garlic Rosemary Ribs, Pirate Ribs and Calypso Chicken and Shrimp Combo. For reservations and more information, call Tony Roma's Manila now located at the ground floor, Glorietta 4, Ayala Center Makati at 757-1925.

BITS Clips

Dermatology confab

A NUMBER of dermatology clinics are mushrooming in and around the Metro promising a wide array of beauty services, augmentation, and surgeries for one's overall enhancement. In this light, the 17th Annual Convention of the Philippine Society of Cutaneous Medicine shall discuss the numerous innovations, latest treatment modalities and state-of-the-art technologies from Aug. 22 to 25. This will be a gathering of the country's dermatological experts along with counterparts on pediatric dermatology, cosmetodermatology, lasers, and the treatments for various diseases such as infection, eczema and tumor. The topic "Advances in Dermatology" will offer lectures and workshops to enrich the knowledge of Filipino dermatologists and update them about the recent trends and breakthroughs in this specialization.

GMA at confab

OVER 500 delegates from the 17 Metro Manila Chambers of Commerce and Industry under the umbrella organization of the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry are attending the two-day Metro Manila Businessmen's Conference on Aug. 22 and 23 at the Westin Philippine Plaza to address vital issues on free market economy. President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo is the guest of honor at the Gala Night on Aug. 23. The conference program includes the keynote address of economist Bernardo Villegas, successful business strategies of industry leaders Splash Corp., Nutrilicious Food Products, marketing guru Josiah Go, Philippine Franchising Association president Alegria Sibal-Limjoco, and Employers Confederation of the Philippines president Donald Dee.

UPPC ENTERS INTO LOAN AGREEMENT

United Pulp and Paper Company (UPPC) recently entered into a loan agreement with Standard Chartered Bank, Sumitomo Mitsui Banking Corp and Siam Pulp and Paper Company (SPPC). UPPC plans to use the $72-million loan to refinance its existing obligations. The signing was held at the Phinma Plaza, Rockwell Center in Makati. Shown are (from left) Pattanapong Cholvanich, CEO, UPPC, Kan Trakulhoon, CFO, Siam Cement Corp, and Kamalkant Agarwal, senior executive vice president, Standard Chartered Bank.

Strategic partnership for clean water, safe sanitation launched

TIME and again, the importance of water is reflected in our daily living. We need water for drinking, cooking, washing clothes, and cleaning our homes. Indeed, water is life and its scarcity may cause illnesses, diseases, malnutrition, and even death.

The latest World Health Organization (WHO) statistics reveal that 1.1 billion people all over the world-roughly one-sixth the world's population-do not have access to safe water. About 2.4 billion people suffer from inadequate sanitation, while 2.2 million people in developing countries, most of them children, die every year from diseases associated with lack of access to drinking water.

In the Philippines alone, as of 2000, there are still about 9 million Filipinos in the rural areas alone who suffer from poor and unsafe sanitation. Most of them come from the marginalized sector of society.

In response to the challenges posed by the impending water and sanitation crisis throughout the world including the Philippines, Geneva-based Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council (WSSCC) and Streams of Knowledge, The Global Coalition of Water and Sanitation Resource Centers, recently introduced the Wash-Streams Partnership program through a launch held at the Bayview Hotel in Pasay City.

The Wash-Streams partnership is undertaking an advocacy campaign to raise public awareness on the need for adequate and affordable safe water, improved sanitation and aggressive hygiene promotion. The partnership is composed of resource centers, NGOs, people's organizations, private corporations and governments supporting the global water supply, sanitation and hygiene (Wash) promotion campaign spearheaded by WSSCC.

WSSCC is a multi-stakeholder organization with members in over 140 countries, including the Philippines. All member-countries are working together to help provide safe and adequate water and sanitation services to poor people around the world, with support from the national governments, private companies and other donors. WSSCC's Wash campaign seeks to gain the support of the international community to give higher priority to communities experiencing severe water, sanitation and hygiene crises through resource allocation.

Streams of Knowledge, on the other hand, is an international organization of water and sanitation resource centers committed to provide people with better access to water, sanitation and hygiene services through various trainings, knowledge and information dissemination programs, action research and technical advice. It has partners in Europe, Latin America, Southern, West and Eastern Africa and Asia.

"The Wash-Streams program is a contribution to make people's lives better through improved sanitation, hygiene promotion and water supply programs," said Gourisankar Ghosh, WSSCC executive director. "All concerned organizations and individuals are invited to join Wash-Streams and help make water, sanitation and hygiene into a reality for all. After all, access to affordable water and sanitation services and hygiene awareness is a basic human right."

According to Rory Villaluna, executive secretary of Streams of Knowledge, the Wash-Streams program in the Philippines has already engaged various stakeholders from both government and non-government organizations, some donor agencies, corporations and local government units to support the Wash advocacy work in various levels.

"Initially, we have tapped their support for increased investments in water supply, sanitation and hygiene. Water is life, but sanitation is dignity and is necessary for a better quality of life, so we need to ensure that we all work together to have a clean and healthy world by 2025," Villaluna concluded.

Call center operator keeps ISO9000:2001 certification

THERE is no stopping Customer Contact Center Inc. (C-Cubed), the first and only ISO9001:2000 certified call center operator in the Philippines, from achieving its target to be the country's premiere outsourced contact service provider.

Espie B. Serrano, C-Cubed quality management representative, attested that C-Cubed recently passed the rigid annual surveillance audit of the ISO9001:2000. C-Cubed certifying body TUV Product Service declared zero-non-compliance on C-Cubed's Quality Management System and implementation. This means that C-Cubed remarkably satisfied ISO9001:2000 standard requirements without a need for a re-audit activity by TUV Product Service.

"We are proud to say that we truly deserve the ISO certification which was granted to us last year," said Serrano. The positive result of the surveillance audit is attributed to the improvement of the company infrastructure, and availability of resources and procedures to support the implementation of key business processes. "The support of C-Cubed's top management and the commitment of its employees in delivering the highest level of quality services are also imperative in meeting our key objectives," Serrano added.

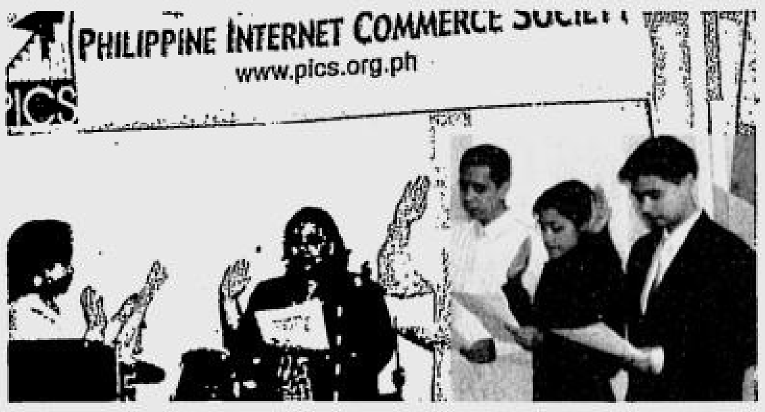
With the renewal of its ISO9001:2000 certification, C-Cubed can further assure its international and local clients a world-class customer support services.

C-Cubed secured in May 22, 2002 the ISO 9001:2000 certification for its international operations from the prestigious TUV Product Service Asia Pacific, a subsidiary of the leading TUV organization in Germany. ISO9001:2000 is a quality management standard that specifies the mandatory components of a world-class quality management system.

C-Cubed is a Philippine company that provides outsourced contact center services to leading companies in North America. It has also supported projects for the local companies and offices of multinational firms such as Meralco, Pilipinas Shell, HSBC, and AIG-Philam. C-Cubed currently operates two call centers in Metro Manila, providing customer support 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Its main facility seats up to 1,000 agents.

EK's sked today

ENCHANTED Kingdom, the country's world-class theme park, welcomes holiday vacationers today, Aug. 22. Park visitors may enjoy EK's exciting rides and its newest attraction, the 4D Discovery Theater, from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m., with a grand fireworks display at 9 p.m. Admission tickets on Aug. 22 are priced at P500 for the EK Day Pass and P100 for the Carousel Special. The park's newest attraction, the 4D Discovery Theater, is a first in the country. It offers a unique theater experience through vivid 3D images complete with sensory effects like wind blowing, water spraying and leg ticklers. EK has chosen "Escape from Bane Manor," a spine-chilling but amusing film ride for its maiden showing. The park will be closed to the public for a private booking on Aug. 23. For inquiries, call 830-2111 to 16 or 843-6073 to 78, or visit www.enchantedkingdom.com.ph.



PICS BOARD INDUCTION
The Philippine Internet Commerce Society's incoming board for 2003-2004 is shown inducted by Kim Jacinto-Henares, Bureau of Investments Governor. Shown, from left, are Mary Anne D. Tolentino, president, Ramon Lizardo, VP-internal, Gina Duminy, VP-external, and Mark Yambot, secretary. Vic Magdaraog, not shown, is treasurer.

CAPONE'S AT FRASER
Capone's Bar and Restaurant is bringing its popular brand of fine food and entertainment to Salcedo Village in Makati City when it opens at Fraser Place this August. Located at the ground floor facing Valero Street, Capone's general manager Jay Server promises to deliver the same superior, affordable food and quality entertainment fare that Capone's is known for. With interiors designed by young, versatile architect Pandy Lichauco, Capone's at Fraser will set the stage for the new chill-out place in Makati for guests of all ages. Shown during the contract signing are officers of Fun Diners Inc, owners and operators of Capone's at Fraser, with (from left) Angel Pentinio, Fraser Place operations manager, Doj Garcia, Fun Diners vice president, Carlo Gomez, Fraser Place general manager, Jay Server, and Junji Arias, Fun Diners corporate secretary.

MILD SEVEN LAUNCHES SLIPSTREAM RAFFLE

In motor sports, Formula One racing is the king. It brings together the latest in technology, the world's best racecar drivers, and the most challenging racetracks in the world. Mild Seven's Slipstream raffle will allow its patrons to experience the excitement of an actual F1 race. This recently launched promo is available in Metro Manila and Metro Cebu. Mild Seven patrons can use their packs of Mild Seven Original and Mild Seven Lights as entry forms. Drop boxes are in place in groceries, supermarkets, and convenience stores. Mild Seven patrons can submit their entry forms to Mild Seven Pit Babes, shown above, who can be found doing their Slipstream bar tours every weekend. The winner of the Mild Seven Slipstream raffle will go to the Malaysian Grand Prix in Sepang, Malaysia in 2004, root for the Mild Seven-Renault Formula One racing team, and meet drivers Fernando Alonso and Jarno Trulli.

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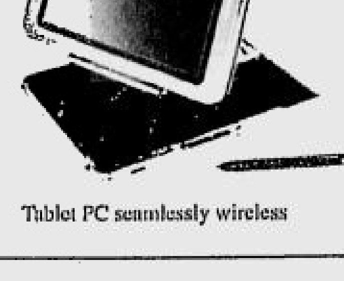
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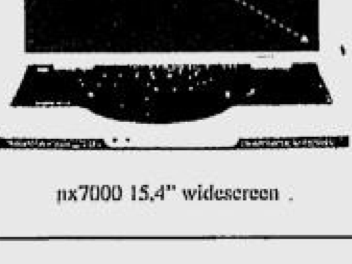

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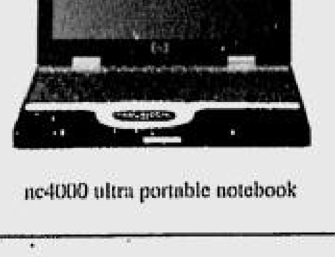
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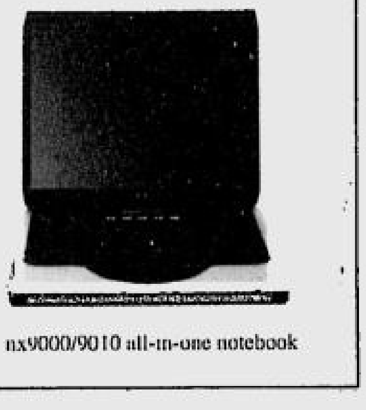
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Coke is most valuable brand for fifth year

IF you find sheer delight in exceedingly complex financial analysis, try the brand valuation model developed by global marketing consultancy Interbrand, which has just released its latest annual ranking of the world's most valuable brands.

Interbrand utilizes a precise financial model to determine, in detail, how much of each product's sales are driven by the brand name, weighted for such other factors as market leadership, stability, and the ability to cross national borders.

For the tens of millions who slake their thirst daily with an ice-cold Coke or two, however, there's little any bean counter can do to convince them further why their favorite soft drink, for the fifth year running, is again on top of the list.

According to BusinessWeek's cover story for its Aug. 4 issue, The Coca-Cola Co. held on to the top spot in the annual Interbrand ranking of the Top 100 Global Brands. In the process, the Coca-Cola brand increased its overall brand value by one percentage point, to $70.45 billion.

Though many brand studies rely solely on opinion polls or ad budgets, Interbrand evaluates brands the same way analysts value other assets—on their future earnings potential. Interestingly, in a ranking that otherwise relies heavily on highly technical quantitative analysis, the increasingly crucial need to be perceived as a responsible global citizen is mentioned, with the publication citing funding to rural schools by Coca-Cola as an example.

In the Philippines, in fact, this has been the focus of the company's community initiatives for most of the past decade (although not mentioned specifically in the article, which cited as examples educational grants made by Coca-Cola through the Palestinian Authority and grants to environmental causes in Spain).

The company has two flagship projects of the sort in the country, both aimed at helping the overburdened Philippine public school system.

These are the Little Red Schoolhouse Project and Coca-Cola ed.venture.

The former has already built and donated to the government 50 modern elementary schoolhouses, all of them in remote rural communities.

The rest of the top ten brands are (in order of ranking) Microsoft ($65.17 billion), IBM ($51.77 billion), GE ($42.34 billion), Intel ($31.11 billion), Nokia ($29.44 billion), Disney ($28.04 billion), McDonald's ($24.70 billion), Marlboro ($22.18 billion) and Mercedes ($21.37 billion).

"The Interbrand method has become the global benchmark for putting the numbers on something as potentially abstract as 'brand value,'" said The Coca-Cola Co. Philippine division president James G. Harting. "It is certainly an honor, but what is truly significant for us who work with this great brand everyday is that we have stayed true to the enduring values of the brand, while interpreting these attributes locally in creative new ways."

"In the end," the article states, "the most effective tactics are surprisingly simple." In a world of ever more complex marketing theories, the enduring, and still growing success of this 117-year-old brand is, a tribute to the importance of never, ever losing sight of the basics.

A brand with sales of $30B a year will remain 'invisible'

By Margie Quimpo-Espino

THE GOOD news is Royal Philips plans to invest "tens of millions of dollars next year in its two (semiconductor) factories in the Philippines."

THE PHILIPS management team. Philips Philippines CEO Menardo Mateo, PD Semiconductors GM Jun Sta. Ana, Medical Systems GM Butch Soriano, chief financial officer Daisy Enriquez, Lighting GM Mario Hernandez, Discrete Semiconductors GM Steven Brader, Royal Philips Electronics CEO for Asia-Pacific Jan Oosterveld, IC Semiconductors GM Melba Cuyahon, and Consumer Electronics GM Angelo Valenton.

This, according to its newly appointed Asia Pacific CEO Jan Oosterveld who was in Manila recently.

The bad news is that Philips Philippines is still not about to create the first "Made in the Philippines" electronic product soon.

The Dutch executive, who almost lives out of a suitcase with his 50-country coverage, was in Manila to oversea Philips' local operations and express its plans in the country.

He said the amount of its investments will depend on the state of both the local and the international economies.

The investments are intended for its two semiconductor factories in Laguna.

These factories make some of the "invisible" products that Philips makes.

Half of its almost $30 billion annual sales worldwide come from products that consumers do not see.

These include:

- 90 percent of mobile phones' speakers
- 40 percent of mobile phones' screens
- one out of every three TV monitor
- every fifth medical equipment in a hospital
- 60 percent of the chips in a TV

And more.

In the Philippines, this conglomerate is still working to make itself become known as more than just a light bulb firm.

To many Filipinos, Philips is the brand of a light fixture. However, over the past years, they have introduced their five divisions in the country which include electronics, domestic appliances, and medical systems.

But its light bulb branding may take a while to erase because it has been present in the country for over 50 years. It started by setting up the Philips Electronics and Lighting Inc. in 1956 at the Trade and Commerce Building in Binondo, Manila.

Today, it employs 5,000 people in its two semiconductor firms. This makes Philips one of the largest employers in the country. The two factories generate export earnings of about $700 million. Oosterveld hopes to increase this to $1 billion.

Oosterveld said however while they do not have plans to create a Philippine-made product, they are here to stay.

"We are relatively loyal to a country and we are in almost all countries," he said.

Philips Philippines has a discrete semiconductors in Cabuyao which supplies most of the always present but hardly noticed chips that are used in mobile phones; audio-video equipment, automotive, engine and fuel management, ABS and multi-media PCs sold in the country.

The other factor, the IC semiconductor plan in Calamba, assembles and test integrated circuits that cater to various applications like connectivity, displays, digital video and storage.

Asked whether they are working to make their invisible brand visible, Oosterveld said no.

He said they cannot work at becoming a visible brand "because we make final products."

Philips makes products that its competitors make such as TV sets, radios, mobile phones. domestic appliances, consumer electronics: and it makes the components that their competitors use.

"We will not do an Intel, putting stickers that say 'Intel inside' because we make final products. But we can talk about it. Although largely the public may not be interested," Oosterveld stated.

However Philips recently launched its Brand Foundation which is basically defining who they are.

"The Brand Foundation defines the company's core and is the very essence of the Philips brand," its statement said.

Brand Foundation tackles seven questions—Where do we come fron? What are we good at? How do we act? What do we believe in? Whom do we serve? How are we different? Why do we do all these?

JAN Oosterveld

Royal Philips Electronics is based in the Netherlands and is 112 years old. It was founded by brothers Anton and Gerard Philips.

Differentiation takes over when branding takes a minor role

By Eman Tonogbanua
Contributor

HOW does San Miguel differentiate its products from Asia Brewery? Coke from Pepsi? BMW from Honda? Nokia from Motorola?

For these firms, branding takes a leading role in differentiation.

But what about providers of complex intangible products? Will branding work the same for firms such as SGV vs Punongbayan? PulseAsia vs SWS? Oracle vs PeopleSoft?

Branding takes on a lesser role for these kinds of businesses. In such cases, differentiation is less connected to product image.

Buyers of consumer and industrial products can go to a showroom or a shop and evaluate the product up close.

But when you're looking at a PR plan, an advertising campaign, legal documents, an HR or accounting system, you become less confident of what you're getting. Not only is the product hard to describe but success is also hard to define.

As a complex service firm, differentiation at the brand level will only help you get into the short list. At this stage, the prospect has already qualified you based on your credentials. You should get through the door, but branding will not automatically win you the account.

The moment you enter the room, the buyer is now evaluating you based on an emotional process. This happens whether you and the prospect like it or not.

All those preconceived images of brand fade into the background, and it is up to you to convince the prospect that you can be trusted.

As a service company, what else can you do to make clients pen your name on their checks?

There is another source of differentiation that is more powerful and is often untapped. This is the differentiation that happens while you and your prospect are interacting. It is the differentiation during the selling process.

Buying complex intangible services is a two-step process—qualification and trust, the assessment of both may not necessarily be rational in nature.

First, the buyer looks for qualified prospects. This is done by asking for credentials such as client roster, portfolios, company profile, staff experience and financial reports, just to name a few. Some may even ask to visit your office. If you did your homework, your branding should help you pass this stage.

But once you're in the door, the trust dynamic takes over during the actual process of buying and selling.

So instead of devoting all of your time, money and energy on branding, you should also redefine your whole selling process. Differentiate your company by winning prospects' trust through a unique point-of-contact experience.

Don't just rely on your notebook and suffer death by Powerpoint. Most prospects already have dreary eyes staring into a PC monitor. It's all about you and your effort to win the buyer's trust. Let your creative juices flow.

One PR firm asked their prospect, a car rental company, if they can do the presentation in the agency's office. When the prospects arrived, they were treated rudely by the receptionist. The office was in disarray. And they were kept waiting.

Finally, when the fed up executives were about to leave, the managing director of the PR firm came out, apologized and asked the executives how it feels to be treated the same way as the car rental company treats its clients. The agency won the account.

(Eman Tonogbanua is the communications director of Ardent Communication, a marketing public relations agency. Feedback at eman@ardent.com.ph)

Ensuring safety in malls, let's count the ways

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

COMFORT and the availability of goods go a long way in making a shopper decide where to shop.

But the security of knowing the mall operator has put in the necessary precautions to ensure a shopper's safety may have a heavier impact in a consumer's decision where to shop.

Reputable Philippine malls know this and work hard to ensure that they comply with fire and security regulations.

Araneta Center

Maj. Mario S. Acuña, chief security officer of the Araneta Center, one of the country's first and largest shopping mall complexes, tells BusinessFrdiay that the Araneta Center employs its own staff to deal solely with fire and safety regulations, on top of employing outside security agencies.

"Ensuring fire and safety regulations is a must for us. We make sure that all fire equipment, tanks and houses and facilities of each building are checked during every shift and we have three shifts over 24 hours," Acuña says.

The Araneta Center's safety complement has 46 security guards and 294 security personnel from agencies that are deployed in several properties.

These are the Farmer's Plaza, Ali Mall, Fiesta Carnival/Araneta Center, Farmer's Market, the perimeter of the property including the bus terminals and car parks, Aurora Tower and the new Gateway Mall which will be connected to a station of a new Light Rail Transit.

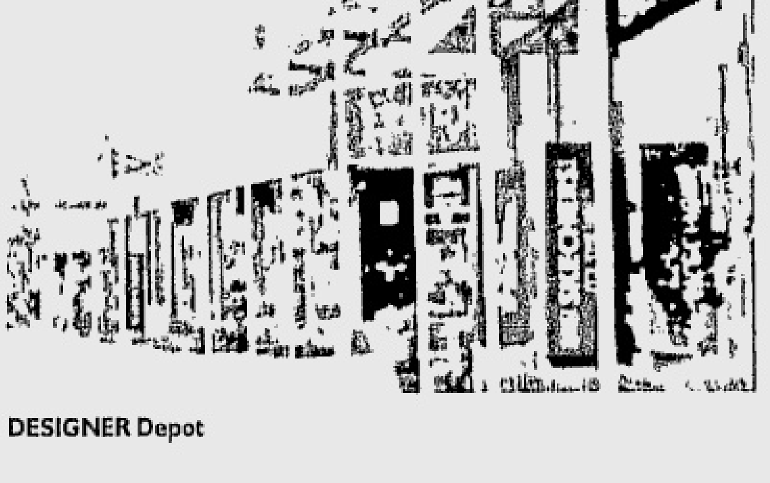
"The other buildings such as Rustan's and Shoemart also have their own people and we are all part of the Araneta Center Businessmen Association which regularly talk about improving fire and security measures in our complex," Acuña says.

He stresses that the Araneta Center management has always emphasized on these measures because it is something that provides consumers that peace of mind to continue patronizing the Araneta Center.

Designer Depot

With Filipinos becoming more budget conscious, there has been a proliferation of outdoor malls that offer both variety but at much more affordable prices compared to the traditional malls.

These outdoor malls carry original branded products but are sold at lower prices either because these are factory overruns or were part of the previous seasons' collections.



DESIGNER Depot

ARANETA Center

One of these is the Designer Depot, which operates converted container vans along the busy thoroughfares of Quirino Highway and Shaw Boulevard in Metro Manila, with the third one to follow in Lipa, Batangas, a province south of the capital of Metro Manila.

Designer Depot manager Tyrone Q. Tolete, however, says that operating its kind of shopping outlet poses unique challenges that may not be present in traditional malls.

Tolete explains, for instance, that there are more entry and exit areas in factory outlet malls compared to the traditional malls.

"This is why we have to be extra conscious about safety. We have developed relationships with the police precincts near our establishments to beef up security. We also have roving guards and we have a hotline with the local government units," Tolete says.

Designer Depot has been in operation for four years and Tolete says that they have been fortunate that incidents of petty crime have been kept at a minimum considering the challenges.

As for fire safety regulations, Tolete says management provides all locators with a list of requirements to comply with fire safety requirements.

It has its own set on top of those required by the government in its building, electrical, sanitary, mechanical and plumbing permits. All units, for instance, are required to install at least one 10-lb. capacity fire extinguisher, which could be more depending on the size of the unit.

Roofing materials are also inspected to make sure that there are no combustible materials that would be used, thus, providing a possible fire hazard to the tenants and the consumers.

Sta. Lucia Grand East

The Sta. Lucia Grand East Mall in Eastern Metro Manila was one of the first to be put up in the area, and since the first 20,000-square-meter building was set up in 1990, fire and security measures have always been a cause for concern.

Sta. Lucia operations manager Cipriano Bongcay says the continued upgrading of the fire and safety requirements of the local government have prompted Sta. Lucia management to also make its own adjustments.

"We are already looking into acquiring the latest in the smoke detector and fire alarm systems as part of our own upgrading measures. Like other malls, we consider fire and safety as very important in our operations," Bongcay says.

He adds that a team is being set up, composed of representatives from Sta. Lucia management and the tenants, to look at more measures to protect the consuming public.

BUSINESS*Friday*

E-mail: pr_business@inquirer.com.ph

Business Features Editor **Margie Quimpo-Espino**

Marketing to the poor—One more time!

MARKETING RX

Dr. Ned Roberto & Ardy Roberto

THERE was a barrage of emails about our advice to an aspiring entrepreneur to market to the poor. The questions could be summarized into:

"Your past two columns on marketing to the poor were very interesting. How can a small entrepreneur do this and compete with the multinationals? What products would sell well?"

It's traditional to think that the job of developing an untapped or largely untapped market belongs to the multinational companies. After all, developing a market usually requires heavy investment or what venture capitalists call "throw-away money." This is true of new markets being penetrated by new products or new generation products. But with pre-existing and long established basic products like food, personal and household care items, and drinks, this is not the case. Just like you and me, the poor have to eat, drink and take care of their body and the place where they live.

Aspirational ...

Also, distinguish between products for everyday or recurring use and those for the four or five occasions of the year when the poor splurge. We've referred to those splurging times of the year as a "large market opportunity." During these times, the poor buy according to aspirational motivations. "Feeling rich" is the purchase driver. So price is a non-issue.

For example, MarketingRx (MRx) was invited to last week's Philippine Retailers Association conference held at the Edsa Shangrila. MRx's seatmate, Joel, the marketing director for one of the largest music store chains in the Philippines, told us this story in Filipino: "It's true how that the poor spend more at our stores. Look at our best sellers. It's mostly music that appeals to the masa—like F4 and Sex Bomb! When I visited the homes of our DE market to do some research—it was the squatters and shanties that had the latest CDs, DVD and home entertainment systems! *Talo pa ako!*"

...versus affordable

For everyday or recurring products, the purchase motivation is price-driven. The product has to be affordable and with a minimum acceptable quality. What is affordable?

You have to find out from the poor. Do some research even if it's just as informal as an on-site observation and interviews. There's a lot you can learn by just observing. Consider, for example, food. In our last Consumer Coping Survey (available from AIM or at LifeCycle Books, Tel No. 813-2732/45), we saw that the Class DE mothers like buying instant noodles, especially Lucky Me!. When asked why Lucky Me!, they explained that it's affordable and "*talagang masarap*" (really good tasting). There's your twin purchase motivation driver in action.

One pouch of Lucky Me!, according to DE mothers, costs less than P5 pesos. It's exactly P4.50. To prepare it as a meal, what Mrs. DE does is to place the Lucky Me! noodle in lots of water and then add inexpensive but highly nutritional green veggies. The cheap vegetables that Mrs. DE buys cost about P5. So the total instant-noodle based meal is P10 or less. That's what's affordable to the poor for a meal.

What's Mrs. DE's benchmark for declaring that P10 or less is affordable? One housewife explained it this way:

"*Kasi yun lang anak kong panganay ang kumikita ngayon. Watch-your-car boy siya. Ang karaniwang kita niya sa isang araw ay tatlumpung piso. Tatlo yung anak ko at kasama itong mister kong walang trabaho, so sa aming lima, pinagkakasya ko yung trenta pesos. Sa araw-araw, gusto ko tatlong beses kaming kakain. Kaya, bawat kain, sampung piso ang budget ko.*" (You know, my eldest son is our only source of income. He's a watch-your-car boy. He ordinarily averages P30 a day. I have three children and with a husband who's out of a job, I try to stretch for the five of us the P30. I want us to eat three times a day. So for each meal, my budget is P10.)

This tells you that to learn what's affordable to the poor, get the poor buyer's story on what's cheap. Don't ask the direct question: "*Magkano po ang kaya ninyo?*" (What's affordable to you?) You simply won't get an insightful answer.

Lessons from Lucky Me! and Ford

How can the makers of Lucky Me! produce such a cheap product and yet have superior taste quality? It's a matter of being highly efficient out of your sourcing of raw materials, your manufacturing process, and your distribution and selling. Actually the Indo-Chinese owner and founder of Monde Nissin Corp, the makers of Lucky Me!, who was originally a biscuit marketer, saw an opportunity in the instant noodles market. This low-profile entrepreneur (whose name is withheld by request) had been selling biscuits in the Philippines since 1979. In 1989, he decided to produce instant noodles targeting the *masa*. Lucky Me! was launched then when Nestlé's Maggi was the dominant market leader. By 1992, Lucky Me! was market leader.

Today, Lucky Me! as of the first quarter of 2003, according to market research surveys, is the dominant market leader with 70 percent market share. (The market for instant noodles in the Philippines is now P6B. Yes, that's billion.) Where is Tita Maggie's Maggi? It's a far third at 10 percent share. (The Gokongwei's PayLess brand is second at 14 percent.) A complete market leadership reversal. A start-up entrepreneur beat a global consumer giant. What seemed impossible to marketing observers was achieved; all because of positioning his product to the *masa*.

It's also a matter of starting your pricing decision from the market price rather than the usual cost-plus pricing method. It was Henry Ford—the original manufacturer of cars for the masa—who enunciated this pricing policy and principle when he said in the 1930s:

"When pricing, start with the market price. (What the market can afford.) Then let the people in manufacturing and finance find a way to drive down the cost of production and money until you have a product that's profitable."

So there's your product policy Rx for marketing to the poor.

Feedback at MarketingRx@SaltAndLightVentures.com

Family wealth planning

TAX-FILES

By Rafael Ma. C. Vinzon
SGV & Co

THERE are several reasons to conduct wealth planning:

1. Achieve the personal goals of the planner;
2. Make sure that there is enough income to meet expenditures at the time of death;
3. Ensure proper management of the properties which consist the estate; and
4. Minimize expenses of administration.

There is a fine distinction between estate planning and family wealth planning. Estate planning focuses on the various ways to rationalize taxes to be paid on the estate of the decedent. Family wealth planning (FWP), on the other hand, goes beyond just concerning one's self with taxes.

FWP gives importance to the wishes and objectives of the owner. He will have the privilege to decide what kind of property he would like to give, to whom. For as long as his wishes are in conformity with the Civil Code provisions on succession, he has the authority to will what he thinks is in accordance with what is morally right.

How often have we seen surviving heirs resorting to selling hard-earned properties of a decedent in order to pay of his debts. Corollarily, without satisfying all obligations of the decedent, the transfer of some, if not all, of the properties will be affected.

Thus, another objective of FWP is to keep the estate liquid enough to meet the decedent's obligations at the time of death. This is one situation when another FWP tool can be very useful— a life insurance. By making sure that the proceeds of the insurance policy is enough to take care of the debts, there should be no reason for the heirs to panic and start selling the assets prematurely, and at a loss.

It could happen also that a decedent's management skills did not rub off on the heirs, or the latter were simply prevented, for one reason or another, from acquiring the skills necessary to continue with the business.

This poses a major problem for the heirs because the absence of such management required to run the business left behind by the decedent could spell disaster. This brings us to another FWP tool, allowing the heirs to manage the business during one's lifetime and identifying which of the heirs will manage what part of the business.

Having shared the business with the heirs, the owner can live with the happy thought that even in his lifetime, he can take his much needed break.

It goes without saying that adopting various FWP tools will prevent unnecessary expenses incurred for legal fees, administrator's fees, and fees attributed to the possible court proceedings, among others. Having placed things in order, which is the principal reason to undertaking FWP, will prevent the parties from getting themselves into litigation in order to arrive at a compromise.

Effectively, the compromise is done by the testator, the owner, or simply, the decedent, before death. Thus, the costs and heartaches attributed to feuding heirs will be avoided.

Finally, what may be the most important reason for FWP is allowing savings in terms of taxes. Not tax evasion, we emphasize. FWP promotes the payment of the correct taxes at the right place and time.

What are the FWP techniques used?

1. Last Will and Testament

This satisfies the first objective in FWP, that the wishes of the testator is given priority. Lawyers are advised of the strict requirements in preparing a will, as well as allowing one to probate. The testator (or the person who makes a will) has the chance to appoint the person he wishes to manage the estate. He is not forced by law to let just any of the heirs manage the estate, which could happen where there is no last will and testament.

2. Donations or Gifts

Perhaps one of the best FWP planning tools is this thing called donation inter vivos, or donation during one's lifetime. This way, the owner can give as much property to the heirs which they expect to inherit anyway, and leave enough for the owner to live comfortably by during his lifetime. Usually, even the income from properties already donated remains with the donor/owner during his lifetime. The donor's tax paid as a result of the donation inter vivos is expected to be reasonably less than what the donor would have otherwise paid from his estate when paid as estate tax at the time of his death.

3. Life insurance

A life insurance policy insures the heirs from unreasonable expenses upon the sudden death of the property owner. The expenses to be incurred for the hospitalization, funeral, and fees that go with the forced transfer of the properties to the heirs can be taken from the insurance proceeds. During one's lifetime, the insured can already determine or estimate, to what extent he would like the estate or heirs to be liquid should he suddenly pass away. Having this in mind, the insured can get as much insurance necessary to match the proceeds with the expected need of the estate and the heirs.

4. Family Corporation

There are several advantages to forming a corporation. One is the obvious advantage taken from the main feature of a corporate entity being legally separate and distinct from its stockholders. This exposes the stockholders/heirs to limited liability, or generally, only to the extent of their participation in the corporation. Also, while the owner is already able to achieve his purpose of transferring property away from him, he manages to keep control over his properties by keeping control over the corporation while at the same time beginning to share power with his heirs.

A typical method to achieve transfer of an individual's properties to a corporation is by way of this procedure allowed under the Tax Code, otherwise referred to as a "tax-free exchange." Thus, the law provides that no gain or loss is recognized if a person exchanges his property for stock in a corporation where as a result of such exchange, said person, alone or together with others not exceeding four persons, gains control of said corporation. The tax in this instance is deferred until such time that the corporation transfers the property received in the exchange, or the stockholder transfers the stocks received in the exchange.

5. Trusts

There are several reasons for using a trust relationship as an FWP tool" a) as a vehicle for the systematic accumulation of capital; b) to provide management over the property even in the owner's absence; c) as a stand-by device to take over management under certain events happening;

d) where the owner is unable to manage his own property; and

e) as a tax-saving scheme, among others.

6. Foundations

Giving back much of what the owner has earned to the needy, favors putting up the corresponding Foundation.

The Foundation ensures the owner that his wishes towards this end will be followed even after he passes away. Just by way of a stern warning, where some believe that a Foundation can be used to indiscriminately withdraw funds from the estate, unfortunately, cannot be done.

One does not have to be too old to understand the importance of FWP.

Rather, one should just imagine that in this unpredictable game called life, a person is as good in life as he is in the other life if the persons he loves and leaves behind will remain one in loving him and what he worked hard for.

Why CEOs must have vision and strategy

By Karen V. De Asis
Contributor

PITY those organizations headed by chief executive officers (CEOs) without blueprints for strategic direction.

This may sound insane in this day But it does happen with the less-professionally run organizations—big or small.

This leads to mismanagement and mediocre performance.

Clear vision

For an expert CEO, three months is often sufficient to get the required data, establish the network linkages within and outside the organization, scan the environment, evaluate the organization's strengths and weaknesses—information that will enable him to crystallize the framework of a strategic direction and shared values for the company.

While major details of the strategic direction can be fleshed out in the near future with key senior and middle managers, the soul of the strategic plan or the big idea necessarily emanates from the CEO, supported by the Board of Directors.

This is the very reason why CEOs get substantial compensation and incentives—to pull the organization towards one direction that will help it reach its objectives, improve shareholder value and sustain existence for the longest time.

If the Board allows a situation where the CEO simply coasts along, the same Board may be party to not understanding the value of a strategic business plan.

Successful CEOs

Great, successful CEOs are visionaries and to a large extent, musical conductors steering the organization to play beautiful, in-sync music. Hence, CEOs who believe that they can delegate entirely their strategic responsibility to consultants have no business being a CEO.

Sir Colin Marshall, British Airways chair is the visionary behind the airline's successful corporate turnaround in the '80s. The airline was originally known for its indifferent treatment of customers.

Marshall led British Airways to a new philosophy grounded on what he calls, "an evangelistic determination to strive for customer excellence." This, he did in an era where customer service was not yet the norm for operational excellence.

When Carly Fiorina was appointed CEO of Hewlett Packard, the first thing she did was capitalize on the organization's heritage and success. The company's new tag line, Invent, became a mantra inside and outside the company, asserting a renewed mission, "The original start up will act like one again." Needless to say, a new leader rediscovering the company's heritage has released new-spirited energy throughout the organization.

Positive culture

A vision, mission and strategy that is clearly articulated and communicated can help shape a positive, company culture.

A CEO can only build a strong, meaningful culture based on a compelling vision and organizational direction.

Lack of vision, confused or double-talk strategy can only lead to muddled results and negative behavior, thus, a negative bottom line.

In 1991, Melvin Goodes was appointed CEO of Warner Lambert at a time when the company was perceived as a likely takeover candidate. Five years later, Warner Lambert more than enjoys the buoyant confidence of its shareholders as the company reported more than quadruple earnings in five years.

Goodes' mission was to "change a culture of entitlement to a culture that expressed, stimulated and rewarded individual and team performance," a mission made real through a 360 degree program that is a forced ranking system that evaluated employees' contributions coming from four sources i.e. peers, direct reports, supervisors and oneself.

Further, the company's strategic direction was clearly articulated in a vision and culture statement that espouses five attributes the company would like to stand for. These are sound sciences that provide superior products and attractive prices, speed and being first mover in exploiting new opportunities, rewarding individual and team successes, openness and candidness in dealing with partners and finally, recognizing creativity and prudent risk-taking.

Professional will and humility

In a breakthrough research project by Jim Collins, author of the book Good to Great, he reveals that great leaders have built enduring companies through an unexpected combination of personal humility and professional will.

This interesting finding came at the height of a prevalent belief among traditional thinking board of directors that a larger than life egocentric leader can effectively transform organizations.

When George Cain became CEO of the family-controlled Abbott Laboratories, it was a middling-performing company. But Cain, despite a modest personality had a strong vision of "inspired standards" fleshed out by a mission to correct what was the very root cause of Abbott's ham performance and that is nepotism.

Cain displayed strong professional will when he rebuilt an executive team and board with the best people he can find even if it meant replacing family or friends of family. His message, "if you couldn't become the best executive in the industry within the span of your responsibility, you are likely to lose your paycheck." While this direction initially created a sour note at Christmas gatherings where Cain is part of the family, nonetheless, he proved his point with Abbott's profitable growth even outperforming industry favorites, Merck and Pfizer.

The same attributes characterize Darwin Smith, another gracious but fearless personality and Chief Executive Officer of Kimberly Clark for twenty years.

In 1971, Smith with resolute determination clearly defined the company's identity and strategic thrust as a consumer paper products company with investments in brands like Huggies diapers and Kleenex tissues. In doing so, he made the most dramatic decision in the company's history to sell its mills, a move sneered at by many.

Two decades later, Kimberly owns Scott Paper and is the top performing in six of eight consumer paper product categories.

Contrast this to the egocentric, former CEO of Scott Paper; Al Dunlop who loves to breast beat about his accomplishments.

While still a CEO, Dunlop shared in a Businessweek issue, "The Scott story will go down in the annals of American business history as one of the most successful, quickest turnarounds ever."

Unfortunately, his only real claim to fame while CEO of Scott for two years was his substantial paycheck of $100M for 603 days of work from an ailing organization with a compensation subsidized mainly by cutting the workforce, slashing R & D projects, penny pinching and pussyfooting on marketing investments—all these eventually led to the company's sale.

Clearly, enduring success can only come to organizations that are able to establish a symbiotic, cohesive relationship around a compelling vision, culture and energizing leadership. Without the fluid direction of a CEO, often the highest person tasked with operational guidance and leadership, the company can only fall apart or drop dead into hell's bottomless pit truly, a frightening proposition for all shareholders.

(The author is Professor of Strategic Marketing Management and Brand Management at the De La Salle Professional School's Graduate School Of Business. Email address at kdeasis@skyinet.net.)

INVITATION FOR QUALIFICATION AND BID

The Government of the Philippines has received a loan from the **Asian Development Bank (ADB)** and intends to apply a portion of the proceeds of this loan to eligible payment under the contracts for which this invitation for qualification and bid is issued.

The **Pasig River Rehabilitation Commission** as the Executing Agency and the **Municipality of Rodriguez** as the Implementing Agency are inviting **"AAA" CATEGORY CONTRACTORS** to apply for Qualification and Bid for the following packages:

CONTRACT PACKAGE	CONTRACT NO.	LOCATION	CONTRACT DURATION	PROJECT DESCRIPTION/AREA
1. Site Development of School Bldgs.	EPA-RAP-CF01	Blk. 1, F. Rodriguez Extn. Villa Ana Maria Subd. Brgy. San Jose Rodriguez, Rizal	240 days	Site Development of the proposed 3-storey school building for Elementary and High School
2. 3-storey school building for Elementary Level	EPA-RAP-CF02	Blk. 1, F. Rodriguez Extn., Villa Ana Maria Subd. Brgy. San Jose Rodriguez, Rizal	360 days	Construction of a 3-storey school building for Elementary level
3. 3-storey school building for High School Level	EPA-RAP-CF03	Blk. 1, F. Rodriguez Extn., Villa Ana Maria Subd. Brgy. San Jose Rodriguez, Rizal	360 days	Construction of a 3-storey school building for High School level

Interested contractors will be required to submit their accomplished qualification documents and bid proposals at the same time in two (2) separate sealed envelopes. The envelope containing the bid will be kept in a sealed box, which will not be opened until after the completion of the qualification evaluation, and the list of qualified contractors has been finalized. Only the bids of the qualified contractors will be opened on the date of the bid opening. The bids of qualified contractors will be returned unopened.

Interested contractors may obtain further information and secure the qualification and bid documents at the following address:

Municipal Planning and Development Office
Municipality of Rodriguez, Province of Rizal
Rodriguez Municipal Building, J.P. Rizal Avenue, Rodriguez, Rizal
Telephone Nos. (02) 941-1338 / (02) 941-1295

A complete set of qualification and bid documents may be secured by interested contractors from the above address starting on **August 22, 2003**, upon submission of a letter of intent and proof of payment (receipt) from the Municipality of Rodriguez of a non-refundable fee of Ten Thousand Pesos (Php 10,000.00) per contract package. Interested contractors are requested to pay at the Office of the Municipal Treasurer, Ground Floor, Municipal Building, J.P. Rizal Avenue, Rodriguez, Rizal.

Site inspection and Pre-Bid Conference is on **August 29, 2003**, 10:00 a.m. at the Conference Room of the Mayor's Office of the above-mentioned address. The accomplished qualification documents and the bid in two (2) separate envelopes must be submitted to the Municipal Planning and Development Office before 1200 hours on October 6, 2003. The date of bid opening will be announced later.

The contractors shall submit together with the qualification documents a notarized sworn statement stating their project workload as of date of bidding, including newly awarded but not yet stated contracts with the corresponding contract amount.

All particulars relative to Prequalification, Bid Evaluation and Award of Contract shall be governed by the ADB Procurement Guidelines and other pertinent laws and regulations. The BAC reserves the right to reject any or all bids without offering any reason, waive minor informalities, or accept such bids which will be the most advantageous to the government. The decision of BAC is final and binding.

(Sgd.) **ENGR. PEDRO S. CUERPO**
BAC Chairperson

(PDI - Aug. 15 & 22, 2003)

Office of the President
Republic of the Philippines
CLARK DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
Clark Special Economic Zone, Pampanga

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

Clark Development Corporation (CDC) through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC) invites interested suppliers for the hereunder listed project:

"SUPPLY, DELIVERY AND INSTALLATION OF COMPUTERS & SOFTWARE LICENSES FOR CLARK DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION'S LEASE-TO-OWN PROJECT"

The project includes supply, delivery and installation of 199 computers (desktop and laptop) with software licenses, provision of maintenance, warranties, technical support and after-sales services and trainings.

Interested parties may submit Letter of Intent (LOI) and Eligibility Form for bidding not later than **September 10, 2003** (9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.) at the Office of BAC Secretariat, 3rd Floor, Bldg. 2127, E. Quirino Ave., CSEZ Pampanga. Interested suppliers/parties are hereby required to submit the accomplished Eligibility Statement and LOI, with the requirements:

a) DTI/SEC registration, Mayor's permit/Municipal License, Tax Payer Identification Number, Sworn statement of the bidder that it is not "blacklisted nor barred from bidding in any government agency, office or corporation;
b) Certified copy of Income Tax Return (ITR) and audited financial statements, stamped and received by the BIR, for the last three (3) succeeding years;
c) Certificate of Authorized Distributorship for the equipment;
d) Certified list of contract and acceptance of similar completed projects for the last three (3) years.

Issuance of Eligibility Form will be on **August 22 to September 3, 2003** (9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.) at BAC Secretariat, 3rd Floor, Bldg. 2127 upon payment of non-refundable fee of Php 5,000.00.

The Approved Budget for the Project to be Bid is **Php 14 million.**

Only those who are qualified for the said project shall be invited and notified for the schedule of pre-bid and bidding conferences. Bid/Tender Documents are available for issuance to qualified contractors at the above-cited address upon payment of non-refundable fee of Ten Thousand Pesos (Php 10,000.00).

CDC reserves the right to reject any or all applications on all bids without offering any reason, waive any formality, informality/and/or defect and to make an award to the bidder whose proposal is most advantageous to the government, nor does CDC guarantee that an award will be made.

Submission and opening of bids shall be announced in the Notice of Eligible Bidders.

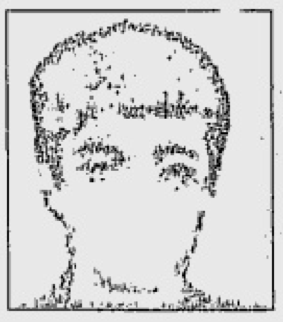
All inquiries and letters shall be addressed to:

The BAC Secretariat
Clark Development Corporation
3rd Floor, Bldg. 2127, E. Quirino Avenue, CSEZ, Pampanga

(Sgd.) **ROMEO N. DYOCO, JR.**
Chairman
Bids and Award Committee

(PDI - Aug 22 & 29 2003)

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC



This is to notify the public that **Mr. MICHAEL "Mike" N. ALCANTARA**, whose picture appears above, and who previously occupied the position of MIS Manager, is no longer connected with **Rustan Supercenters, Inc. (Shopwise) & Royal Duty Free Shops, Inc. effective July 30, 2003.**

Any purported transaction, agreement or contract entered into by **Mr. Alcantara** for and in behalf of **Rustan Supercenters, Inc. (Shopwise) & Royal Duty Free Shops, Inc.** after the aforesaid date shall no longer be honored and recognized by the company.

(PDI - Aug 22 2003)

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NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the application of **CELLOOM FURNITURE CORPORATION** of 10-H Abellana Street, Canduman, Mandaue City for registration with the Board of Investments under Book I of the Omnibus Investment Code of 1987, otherwise known as Executive Order No 226, as amended by Republic Act 7918, as a **New Export Producer of Furniture and Fixture Made of Aluminum and Loom Fabric** at a capacity of 15,000 pieces per year and with proposed plant site at 10-H Abellana Street, Canduman, Mandaue City, has been officially accepted on August 20, 2003 and is currently being processed.

Any person with valid objections to or pertinent comments on the above-mentioned application may file his/her comments, objections in writing with the Board of Investments within one (1) week from the date of this publication.

Let this notice be published at the expense of the applicant

(Sgd.) FRANCISCO C. CHAVEZ
Director
Project Evaluation and Registration Department

(PDI–August 22, 2003)

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GOLDJUNCTION CORPORATION
BUILDERS AND DEVELOPERS

NOTICE OF MEETING

To: All members of the Board.

The corporate meeting will be held at the principle office at - #12 Robina St., Brgy Bungad, San Francisco Del Monte, Quezon City at 3:00 o'clock in the afternoon on September 05, 2003

AGENDA

1. Quorum
2. Organizational and administrative expenses
3. Payment of contributions
4. Project proposal
5. Other matters

In Quezon City, July 30, 2003

(Sgd.) ROSARITO F. PIZARRO
O I C Corporate Secretary
GOLDJUNCTION CORPORATION

Trans Co
NATIONAL TRANSMISSION CORPORATION
South Luzon Operation & Maintenance

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID
AD NO. TRANSCO 2003-09A

The Southern Luzon Transco (SLT), Transco wishes to invite interested parties to apply for eligibility and to bid on the items listed below:

SCHEDULE		ITEM DESCRIPTION	PR NUMBER
DATE OF BIDDING: SEPTEMBER 16, 2003; 2:00 PM			
A1	9 SETS	LINEMAN'S BODY BELT	3CNA-03-090
A2	4 SETS	CLIMBER SET AND WIRE GRIP	CAV-03-106
A3	6 SETS	CLIMBER SET POLE	3LAG03-168
A4	1 LOT	CLIMBER SET AND 5 OTHERS	3QUE-03-083
A5	1 SET	CHAIN BLOCK	3NCS-03-031
DATE OF BIDDING: SEPTEMBER 17, 2003; 2:00 PM			
A1	1 SET	VARIABLE POWER SUPPLY UNIT	PSMD-North03-089
A2	1 LOT	STICK, TELESCOPIC AND 4 OTHERS	D1-03-173
A3	1 LOT	PAINT, ANTI-CORROSIVE AND 5 OTHERS	3LAG03-109
A4	1 UNIT	POWER TRANSFORMER	CAV-03-075
A5	1 LOT	HOIST, CAPSTAN	3CSA03-056

Complete sets of Application Form for Eligibility and Bid Documents may be obtained from the Office of the Manager, Administration Division, SLT, San Vicente, Biñan, Laguna, upon payment of a non-refundable fee of P100.00 per schedule starting **August 27, 2003.** No bid documents will be issued on the date of bidding.

Bids will be received at the SLT Bidding Room, Transco-SL, San Vicente, Biñan, Laguna, until 2:00 o'clock P.M. on the date specified above after which Eligibility Requirements and initial Technical Proposals of eligible bidders will be opened in the presence of attending bidders.

Prospective Bidders shall signify conformance to bidding terms and conditions as required and shall ensure the same through proper submission/execution. The procurement rules and regulations used in this transaction shall be in accordance with the Implementing rules and regulations of "Executive Order 40."

The Bidder shall furnish as part of his bid, a bid security in the amount equivalent to at least 1% of the approved budget in the form of Cash, Manager's/Cashier's Check, Certified Check, Bank Draft, Irrevocable Letter of Credit, or 1.5% of the approved budget in the form of Bank Guarantee, or 2.5% of the approved budget in the form of Surety Bond, penal and callable on demand issued by a Surety or Insurance Company accredited by the Office of the Insurance Commission.

The Corporation reserves the right to accept or reject any bid, and to annul the bidding process and reject all bids at anytime prior to award of contract, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders, or any obligations to inform the affected bidder or bidders of the grounds for the basis of the BAC's action.

(Sgd.) R.D. RAMAS
CHAIRMAN-BAC
TRANSCO SOUTH

(PDI–August 22, 2003)

GENERAL HEADQUARTERS
ARMED FORCES OF THE PHILIPPINES
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF ENGINEERS
Camp General Emilio Aguinaldo
Quezon City

August 14, 2003

INVITATION TO BID

The Chief of Engineers, AFP is inviting contractors with IAC Category of Medium "B" and above & accredited by the Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board to submit sealed bids for the Construction of Food Services Building and Supply of Kitchen Equipment at Armed Forces of the Philippines Medical Center (AFPMC), V. Luna Road, Quezon City, Zip Code # 0840.

Interested contractors possessing the above qualification may apply for pre-qualifications by securing PRE-C form beginning August 18, 2003 from Project Management Division, Office of the Chief of Engineers, AFP Camp General Emilio Aguinaldo, Quezon City upon payment of non-refundable fee of One Thousand Pesos (P1,000.00). Deadline for the submission of duly accomplished PRE-C with all the supporting documents and the original copy of PCAB Certificate for authentication purposes shall not be later than 5:00 p.m. of September 5, 2003.

Bid/Tender Documents will be issued to all pre-qualified contractors starting September 15, 2003. A pre-bid conference for the project will be on October 1, 2003 at 9:00 a.m. at Armed Forces of the Philippines Medical Center (AFPMC) Conference Room, V. Luna Road, Quezon City. All bids from pre-qualified contractors must be submitted to and received not later than 10:00 a.m. of October 6, 2003 at the AFPMC Conference Room, V. Luna Road, Quezon City, after which time, all bids will be publicly opened.

This office reserves the right to reject any or all bids without offering any reason, waive any formality, technicality and/or defect and to make the award to the bidder whose proposal is deemed most advantageous to the government. This office neither assumes any obligation for any loss whatsoever that may be incurred by the bidders in the preparation of their respective bids nor does the office guarantee that an award will be made

(Sgd.) SERGIO A CANDELARIO JR
Brigadier General, AFP
The Chief of Engineers, AFP

(PDI - Aug 18 22 & 29 2003)

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IN LOVING MEMORY

On the Fourth Death Anniversary
of
EDWIN JOSEPH MALLARI LOPEZ

(September 27, 1970 – August 22, 1999)

The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass shall be offered at the following churches:

Minor Basilica of St. Michael the Archangel *Tayabas, Quezon*	6:00 a.m.
Shrine of Our Lady of Manaoag *Manaoag, Pangasinan*	7:00 a.m.
San Isidro de Poblador Parish *Pulilan, Bulacan*	6:00 a.m.
St. James Parish *Ayala Alabang*	6:30 a.m.
Our Lady of Lourdes Parish *Iyam, Lucena City*	5:30 p.m.
St. Ferdinand Cathedral *Lucena City*	6:00 a.m.
Christ the King Parish *Greenmeadows, Quezon City*	7:00 a.m.
Santuario de San Jose Parish *Greenhills, San Juan*	6:15 a.m.
Chapel of the Eucharistic Lord *SM Megamall*	12:15 p.m.

His parents, ERNIE and FRITZIE LOPEZ, only son, CARLOS MIGUEL, his brother JONATHAN and his sister, CATHY and brother-in-law WILLY MARIAZETA, JR. request the pious readers to continue praying for the eternal repose of his soul.

"...absent
with the
body
to be
present
with the
Lord."

2 Corinthians 5:8

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INTERMENT NOTICE

Name	Date of Interment	Time	Place of Interment	Place of Wake
NEMENCIO O. FUENTES	Aug 22, 2003	1:00 PM	Holy Gardens Memorial Park, Angono, Rizal	#10 CCL. Guido St., San Roque, Angono, Rizal
LIGAYA M. CHANCO	Aug 23, 2003	1:00 PM	Holy Gardens Memorial Park Angono, Rizal	#357 Doña Aurora St., Angono, Rizal
ABILARDO T. JAUOD, SR.	Aug. 23, 2003	2:00 PM	Holy Gardens Memorial Park Taytay, Rizal	A. Bonifacio Ave., Cainta Rizal

KAHANGAHANGANG PARANGAL PARA SA MINAMAHAL

ENGR. CESAR M. REYES

Died peacefully on August 17, 2003 at the age of 55.

His loving wife **Leticia Usero Reyes**; children **Alvin, Mae & Carlo**; sister **Evangeline R. Amurao**; relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at Sta. Rita Parish Church, Philamlife Homes, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Sunday, August 24, 2003 at Holy Cross Memorial Park, Novaliches, Quezon City after the 8:00 a.m. Mass.

In Loving Memory

of

ELSA P. PELAEZ

(August 10, 1910 - August 22, 1992)

FOUNDERS, LICEO DE CAGAYAN UNIVERSITY
Cagayan de Oro City

RODOLFO N. PELAEZ

(January 03, 1912 - August 10, 1980)

and

Masses will be offered at the following churches in Cagayan de Oro City:

Church	Time
Eco Church	6:00 a.m.
Nazareno Parish	6:00 a.m.
San Agustin Cathedral	6:30 a.m.
Divine Shepherd Memorial Gardens	5:00 p.m.
Sacred Heart	7:30 a.m.

The family requests those whose lives they touched to say a prayer for their eternal rest.

MILENA VILLEGAS PARAS

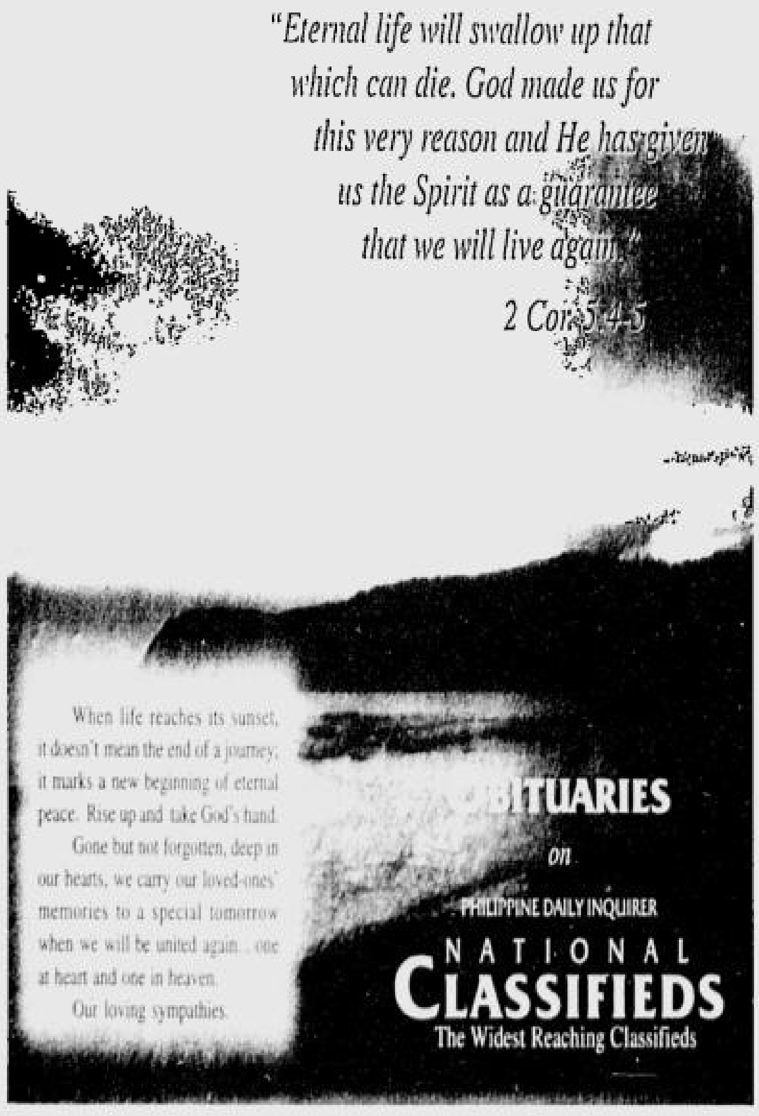
Wife of the late **Dr. Jose Paras**
of Guihulngan, Negros Oriental

Died peacefully in the Grace of our Lord
at the age of 84 on August 20, 2003

Her bereaved sons **JERRY, JING, JAYVEE** and **LITOY**; daughters-in-law **NINA, OLIVE, CHOI-CHOI** and **MARIFLOR**; grandchildren **CRICRI, JOMBEE, JOHN-JOHN, MINGGOY, JAYPEE, KING, JOSLIE, BARBIE** and **MOLLY**; brothers **JUNIOR & GOMER**; sisters **HERMINIA, CORAZON** and **EVA**; brothers-in-law **BILL & JOE**; sisters-in-law **AMPARO, DIGNA** and **IDE**; nieces, nephews, other relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her body lies in state at Chapel A-1 of Funeraria Paz, Araneta Ave., Q.C. and will be brought before noon today, August 22, to her hometown in Guihulngan, Negros Oriental.

Interment will be on Tuesday, August 26, 2003 in Hibalyo, Guihulngan, Negros Oriental after the 2:00 PM mass.



"Eternal life will swallow up that which can die. God made us for this very reason and He has given us the Spirit as a guarantee that we will live again."
2 Cor 5:4-5

When life reaches its sunset, it doesn't mean the end of a journey; it marks a new beginning of eternal peace. Rise up and take God's hand. Gone but not forgotten, deep in our hearts, we carry our loved-ones' memories to a special tomorrow when we will be united again... one at heart and one in heaven.
Our loving sympathies.

OBITUARIES
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Macario "Mac" Convento

Loving father, has joined our Creator on 20 August 2003.
He was 66 years old.

He is survived by his wife **Soledad**; children **Macario Arthur** and **Lani Dawn**, **Evelyn** and **Samson**, **Gladys** and **Philip**, **Mark Anthony**, **Elenita** and **Carlo Mac**; his sister **Elenita**, brother **Perfecto Jr.**, and half sister **Nery**; grandchildren **Liana Dawn**, **Nikolas Robert**, **El Cid**, **Tom Vincent**, and **Bea Louis**.

His remains will lie in state at Funeraria Alvarez, Lopez Jaena, Cavite City. Interment will be at 3:00 p.m. on Sunday, 24 August 2003 at the Dona Gregoria Memorial Cemetery, Wakas, Kawit, Cavite.

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mourns the death of our friend and co-employee

HERMOGENE LASCANO

of Aircraft Maintenance

who joined our Creator on 20th day of August
in the year of our Lord, 2003.

His body lies in state at Brgy. San Isidro,
Ponteve, DRA, Negros Occidental.

Interment will be announced.

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• DEATH ANNOUNCEMENT • MESSAGE OF THANKS
• DEATH ANNIVERSARY • REQUIEMS

BUSINESS

IRR on auto excise tax system readied

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE DEPARTMENT of Finance and the Bureau of Internal Revenue have started drafting the implementing rules and regulations that will govern the new excise tax system on automobiles, ensuring that the revenue regulation will plug all potential loopholes exploited by taxpayers in the past.

An example is the treatment of accessories and whether they should be included in the computation of the prices and taxes.

"We have learned our lesson. We will be very meticulous in the drafting of the IRR and we will define all terms clearly," said Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho.

Revenue Commissioner Guillermo Parayno Jr. said the government would plug all potential loopholes that were circumvented by taxpayers in the past.

The revenue agency is correcting the weaknesses of the law and previous regulations through administrative initiatives. Last week, it issued a regulation that imposed higher taxes on 18 brands of cigarettes introduced after 1997.

"There were discussions on accessories and whether they should form part of the manufacturers' price. We are anticipating cases wherein the assemblers will release bare units (to keep the price at the lowest possible level) and simply add on the accessories later. We may have to specify which should be included in the computation of the price," Finance Undersecretary Gracia Tan said.

Camacho said the DOF and the BIR were already anticipating that the amendments to the automotive excise tax system would be approved soon.

Last week, the Congress bicameral committee approved a unified version of the Lower House and Senate bills on this subject. Camacho said he was expecting Congress to ratify the bicameral version next week.

The passage of the law rationalizing the excise taxation on motor vehicles is expected to reduce the prices of the sedans but increase the prices of 10-seater vehicles that are currently exempted from excise taxes.

However, the increase in the prices of 10-seater vehicles will be lower if the Congressional measure is approved, than the resulting price hike from the implementation of a stricter BIR regulation. The BIR regulation will take effect on Sept. 9.

The bicameral committee agreed on the following tax structure: vehicles worth P600,000 and below will pay a 2-percent excise tax; those costing more than P600,000 to P1.1 million will pay P12,000 plus a 20-percent tax; those costing more than P1.1 million to P2.1 million will pay P112,000 plus 40 percent, and those sold at P2.1 million and above will pay P512,000 plus 60 percent.

RP to seek better balance in trade commitments

By Norman Bordadora

AGRICULTURE Secretary Luis Lorenzo Jr. on Wednesday gave militant farmers a glimpse of the government's position for the trade negotiations at the World Trade Organization meeting in Cancun, Mexico next month.

For instance, he said, the country would push for the imposition of sanctions on imported produce heavily subsidized by wealthy governments that they turned out to be cheaper than locally produced agricultural and fisheries output.

Lorenzo said that the Philippines would push for a better balance in trade commitments between rich and poor countries.

The militant Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas and the Pambansang Lakas ng Mamamalakaya ng Pilipinas had earlier asked the government to bare its position in the coming WTO round of talks.

The Department of Trade and Industry had said that the government would not make public the Philippine agenda in the Cancun round to give negotiators more flexibility during the negotiations.

"The Philippine delegation to the WTO mid-term conference to be held in Cancun, Mexico, in September would press for more favorable treatment for agricultural products coming from developing countries," Lorenzo said.

"The RP delegation, headed by Trade and Industry Secretary Mar Roxas, would press for sanctions against highly subsidized agricultural imports from developed countries," he added.

The militant KMP has assailed the DTI for trying to keep secret the Philippine government's negotiating position saying "the government's position in Cancun is imbued with national interest and public trust."

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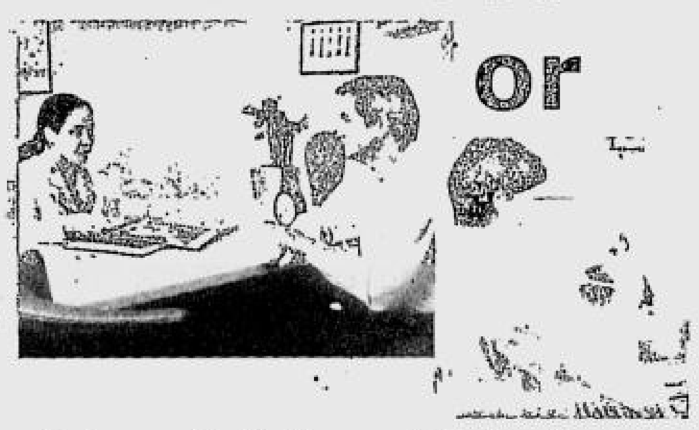

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MON. - FRI. (8 AM - 7 PM) / SATURDAY (8 AM - 3 PM)

LIFESTYLE Trend Spotting

For feedback, text us at (0919) 880-3354 or (0916) 200-1160
or e-mail us at pr_lifestyle@inquirer.com.ph

Editor Chelo Banal-Formoso

Sorry, but if the effort shows, it's not iconic

CHONA Kasten

So you want to be a style icon

LIFE-STYLED

Thelma Sioson San Juan

WHEN all this political mudslinging is over (if it'll ever be over), you wonder, what will be left of the country? Unsalvageable scraps perhaps. And you thought we already hit rock-bottom.

Anyway, over an ultra-comfort *adobo* lunch, friends, who are either fashionistas, fashion designers or know-it-alls, got to talking about style icons, coup-battered Philippine setting. Just what is a style icon and who?

Top of mind are the legends. "Chona Kasten, of course," one said, calling to mind the woman who died a decade or so ago and who in life was a celebrated socialite, model, career woman (she worked for Philippine Airlines training flight attendants and later for Rustan's) and media personality.

"Why?" I said, and answered the question myself, "because no matter her station in life, she showed class and breeding."

That was as far as I knew, observing her at socials, at occasional lunches with us editors and from what people said of her.

Her fashion style was effortless and utter confidence. Seeing her in linen shifts or A-line dresses, I first learned what nonchalant dressing truly was. As the rest of Manila still drowned in ornamentation and polyesters, she wore cottons and natural linens, in A-line, square-necked, knee-length and sleeveless, from work to after-six socials, accenting the dress with only either a scarf or pearls. Her hair was held back in a soft pony tail.

Precisely by being this understated, this woman, I observed, stood out in a crowd oozing with glitz. Or, she'd be neatly tailored—white button-down shirt, its sports collar turned up to frame a bare neck, paired with a slim skirt.

Long before the "little black dress" became the operative concept in fashion, she embodied the concept of classic versatile dressing a smart but simple woman could transform from daytime function to evening elegance.

She was the epitome of a woman who had to work by day and grace socials by evening without calling attention to herself.

And my impression of her extended way into her death. At the wake in the chapel was a solitary table covered in white cloth, on it was a stark urn bearing her ashes and

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MEET AND GREET
Mr. Jordan Herrera of Rexona
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BRIGHT PROSPECTS. She wears a signature Jack Nicklaus navy jacket over a cropped pale blue tee and cream capris. Scarf belt, stylist's own; shoes, Jayvie's own

PRETTY YOUNG THING. Jayvie looks fresh in a crisp white woven shirt and skirt by Jack Nicklaus. Scarf belt, stylist's own

Barely 17, Jayvie Marie Agojo has won golf tournaments in the US. But she just wants to be a regular teener and scream for Keanu and Piolo

SAFARI CHIC. She braves the concrete jungle in a sage vine knitted tee and sandstone cuffed shorts. Head scarf, military belt, bangle and earrings, stylist's own; shoes, model's own

WINNING SMILE. In a Jack Nicklaus pink tee with ruched sleeves, Jayvie shows off her latest prizes from the US: (from left) from the Optimist International Junior Golf Championship (West Palm Beach, Florida), the 2003 Temecula International Junior Golf Championship (Temecula Valley, California) and the 75th Annual San Francisco Junior Golf Event (San Francisco, California).

Scoring a fashion birdie big-time

Text by Cheche V. Moral
Photos by Romy Homillada
STYLING BY JOHN MAGSAYSAY

HOW do you feel about doing this? we ask. She looks around the roomful of 10 or so adults, all eyes on her, and she breaks into giggles. "*Nako*-conscious!" Of course, five minutes into this pictorial and we learn her insecurity is entirely untrue.

This is not another neophyte pop star on her first photo shoot. Sure, like her Hollywood icon Jennifer Lopez, this young woman sings—beautifully and unabashedly, in fact. She thrives under the limelight, her tiny frame sashaying gracefully for the flashbulbs. She pouts playfully, turns pensive, and as easily flashes a megawatt smile without much goading.

But hamming it up for the cameras is not Jayvie Marie Agojo's piece of cake.

Only three weeks into her 17th birthday, the pretty junior golfer is making waves in the golfing circuit for winning local and international tournaments left and right. Last month alone, she brought pride to the country by bringing home three championship trophies from the United States.

Practice makes perfect

"*Basta* I did my best, okay *lang* if I lose," says Agojo. "But I do cry when I'm not supposed to score that bad but somehow do."

The OB Montessori senior has no special rituals prior to a tournament. "I just concentrate on the game," she says, though admitting there is greater pressure to win "because if you've been winning, *kailangan siyempre* you win again. I treat each game the same way."

Heading straight for the greens upon waking up, Agojo says her daily routine is hardly a typical teener's. "My class starts at 8:30, so I'm up by 6," she says. If she misses her morning practice, she is in the driving range at night; Saturdays and Sundays are still spent playing golf.

The girl has kept this schedule strictly for several years, with the stern guidance of her dad—but not without some resentment and crying fits on her part. "*Minsan nakakainis pero wala naman akong magagawa*," she frowns, throwing her dad a mock glare.

"She has to be home by 10 p.m.," her dad says; at this, the daughter rolls her eyes.

Irineo "Jun" Agojo Jr. manages his daughter's career, and follows her around wherever she goes. The teener is his youngest, and he is understandably protective. He could be a slave driver, she says. In fact, she threatens she would quit playing "*pag nainis ako kay papa*."

But that's just the rebellious teenager talking. Her success, she concedes, she owes to her father. And she's playing because she loves the game, not for any other reason.

"I just want her to be prepared," explains the dad. "She decided to get into this, she might as well do well… [For the] gold, [you need] constant practice."

Meeting the legend

Truth is, the father and daughter had a month-long bonding when the young Agojo did the tournament rounds of the US West Coast in July.

In Florida, the girl fulfilled one of her dreams when she met golfing legend Jack Nicklaus. She even got to sit behind her idol's desk. "He looks older in person," she whispers with a mischievous glint in her eyes. "But he was very nice."

While Agojo's mom, Vicky Garcia, is content on watching her daughter from the side lines, her father has been playing the manager's role to the hilt. "When we were in the US, I learned how to use the washing machine," he says. "I even ironed her clothes… Those are things I never do here." The Agojos own and run a talent agency in Makati.

The young champion isn't allowed to go out as much as she wants to. Since she started playing at 9, she grumbles she has not had "a real summer vacation, as in, *yung bakasyon talaga, yung magpunta sa* beach." She is sad that she has to miss out on many things that her friends normally do, but appreciates her father's efforts to make up for them.

"They give me everything I ask for, *maski ano*," she says. She asked for her own car, she got it. Though her dad wouldn't hear of her getting behind the wheel just yet, "I got my license yesterday!" she says excitedly.

Everygirl

Fame, trophies and all, Agojo is no different from other girls her age. She loves makeup (MAC), shoes and clothes (high heels and tank tops). On and off the greens, comfort is topmost, so Jack Nicklaus apparel is her brand of choice. She plays billiards and volleyball, too.

A big pop music fan, her eyes sparkle at the mention of J.Lo's name. "I'm J.Lo!" she cries. "I love her singing, her dancing, her clothes… "

Her dad is firm about their no-boyfriend-till-your-18 pact. But when he looks the other way, she covertly spills the beans on boys. Keanu Reeves and Piolo Pascual are cute, she gushes, then quickly deadpans as she sees her dad making his way back to the table.

Mom, she says, is the keeper of her secrets. She's not interested in any of the young male golfers. "*Walang* challenge," she pouts, then laughs.

The Agojos are now in a fix over the girl's prospects for college. With several US universities (Vassar, Purdue, Northern Arizona, University of Hawaii) having expressed their interest to have her on board, the Agojos are having a hard time deciding. They can't even entertain the thought of parting with their baby. "*Parang hindi namin kaya*," says the dad. "If ever, we would have to visit her alternately every three months. But we don't know yet."

The girl is equally reluctant to leave. "*Gusto ko rin dito lang*," she says, naming La Salle, University of Asia and the Pacific, Thames, among her choice schools. She would one day take over the family business, so she plans to study business management.

College decisions could wait, she shrugs. What she wants now is to go to the beach because "I've never even been to Boracay!" she says emphatically. "Could we go?" she asks her dad pleadingly.

"Not now. You have some catching up to do in school," he says.

"Okay, *sa* sem break!" she says with finality, knowing fully her father would give in.

Once more, she finds a way to skirt around the hazards of the father-and-daughter dynamics and emerge triumphant over the tussle with her pop. It's not often a birdie against him, but the young champ knows, like in her game, constant practice would only make for a better handicap.

E-mail the author at cmoral@inquirer.com.ph

FAIR LADY. Light-skinned Jayvie sports a healthy yearlong tan, but swears, "I always use sunblock."

TEE OFF. Ready to take off for the next tournament, she's dressed in an all-black ensemble of cotton capris and V-neck ¾-sleeved tee, and off-white hat, all by Jack Nicklaus. Scarf worn as belt, stylist's own; shoes, model's own; bag by Jack Nicklaus

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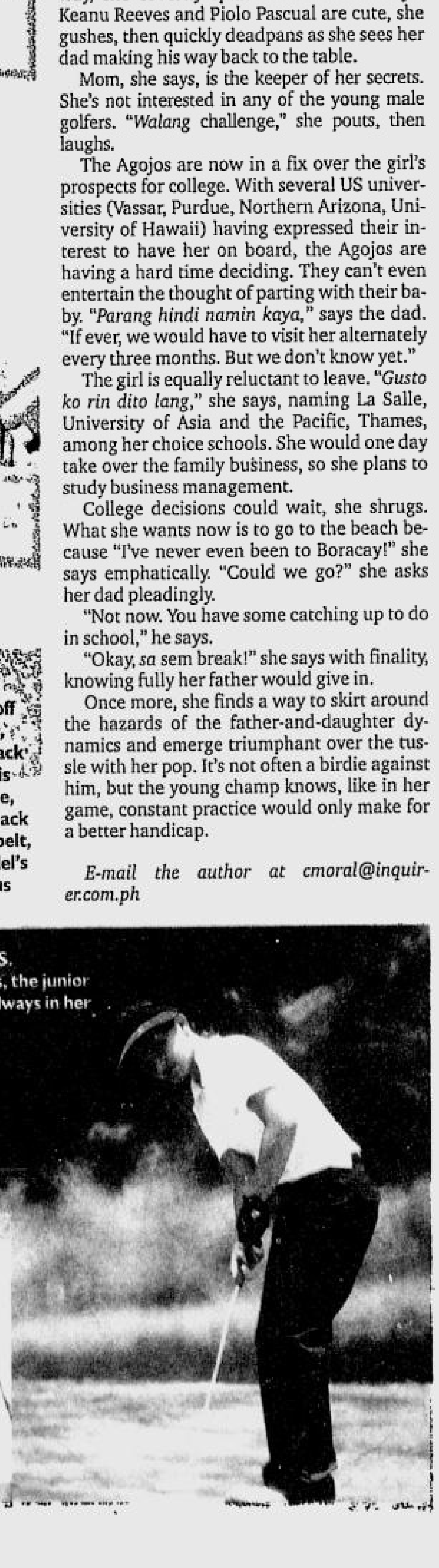
(GOLF) CLUB WEAR. She takes a break from the course in wheat-colored knitted vest, woven shirt and capris, all by Jack Nicklaus. Scarf, stylist's own

GREAT EXPECTATIONS. Dad and daughter hang out with golf legend Jack Nicklaus in Florida.


AUTO FOCUS. On the greens, the junior champion is always in her element.

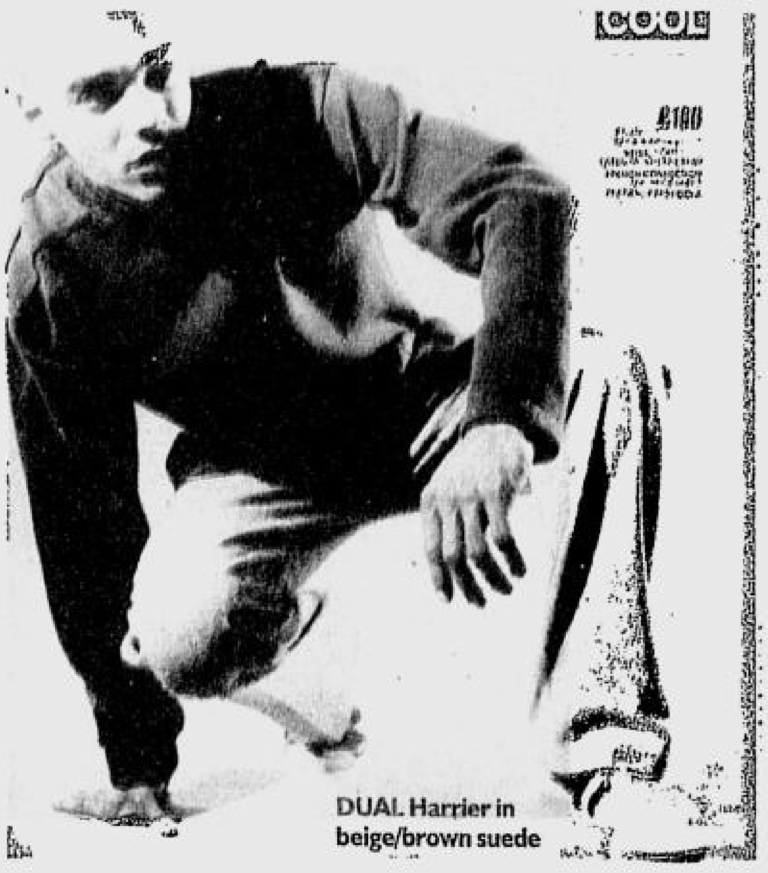
Vintage cool

HARRIER

THE GOLA Classic shoes blend vintage style sensibilities with '70s inspired wingflash and two stripes for understated cool.

Fashion magazines around the world have paired the shoes with everything from denims to tweeds to haute couture.

Now available are top-sellers Harrier, Dual Harrier and Stripe Harrier in striking color combinations like purple/brown, yellow/brown, blue/yellow and orange/green. Other styles to choose from are Arrow, Raven, Shooter, Sniper, Flame, Heat and Inca. Gola Classic Shoes are in all Lee boutiques in Metro Manila .



DUAL Harrier in beige/brown suede

So you want to be a style icon

From page C1

a vase of long-stemmed pink roses. Simplicity and elegance to the end.

Unique

"Of course, **Elvira Manahan**," the designers' voices said in unison. Young or old, they still remember this social icon, the toast of both society and late evening television whose talk was unique and whose laughter even more so.

Whether in a Valera gown or chiffon kaftan, she wore her character, and taught fashion-watchers how character was truly the foundation of style.

"But who's taken their places?" one asked. Names popped up.

"How about xxxx (no names, please; we're strife-torn as it is)?" one said.

"No, too publicity-seeking," another said.

"How about xxxx?" still another said.

"Too young," ironically the young fashionista at the table said. "Give her time and we'll see."

What's wrong with "too young?" I shot back at the table.

Then I remembered my regular exchange with couturier **Auggie Cordero**, who'd always remind me that twentysomethings could not be considered style icons yet because they've not developed the sophistication, self-confidence and identity that could come only from making choices and having been through various experiences in life.

Auggie always stressed the need for one to have the means—not only financial—and access to various options before one could truly discover one's style.

Flippant

Such heavy demands on a supposedly flippant matter as style. But then again is style really that peripheral or superficial? Not really, not when livelihoods, lives, fortunes, businesses, media (including the invention of lifestyle sections) have been built on it, or have gone pffft because of it.

In the book "The Power of Style," authors **Annette Tapert** and **Diana Edkins** quoted the American style icon **C.Z. Guest** (who's now 80): "Style is about surviving, about having been through a lot and making it look easy."

And also the fashion legend **Givenchy**: "With style, you must stay as you are."

The authors went on: "Whimsy, good humor, an appreciation of the unexpected—call it what you will, a healthy sense of the fundamental absurdity of life."

And: "Resourcefulness—in this case, the refusal to take a meaningless yes for an answer."

"How important is money? Less important than you might think."

Perhaps all this is behind what Auggie meant that you couldn't be 20 and be dubbed a style icon.

Ah, but then one looks around and sees that these pretty young things are indeed stylish. Young Filipinas are fashion-forward. Moreover, they are bold, daring and adventurous in dressing. They're not only comfortable showing flesh, they do it with allure—from shoulders to cleavage to navel, especially navel.

So does that mean this age has no style icon yet? It could have one, if we didn't have Auggie Cordero standards.

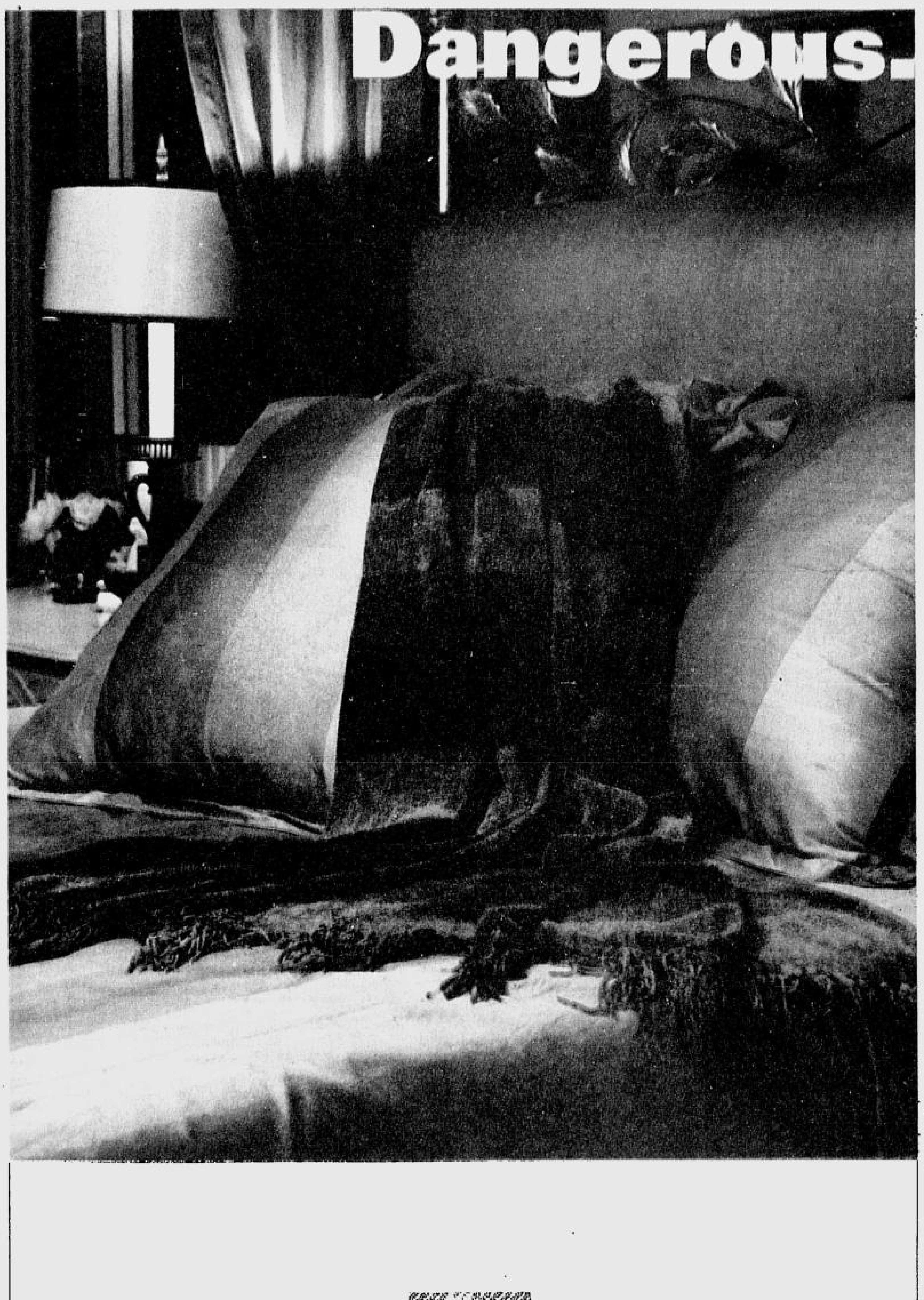
But I think the fashionistas out there who are style icon-wannabes better keep this in mind: Don't let your effort show like your credit card bill. Don't be a walking tear sheet from Vogue. Nothing too learned and put-on.

Nonchalance and self-confidence are the best style there is. In short, don't lose sleep over it.

Nobu executive chef Ricky Ertrallado is in town to do a nine-course kaiseki dinner on Aug. 25-27 for P5,000 per person. Proceeds of the night's event will go to Bantay Bata.

For feedback, tsanjuan @skyinet.net

ELVIRA Manahan



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Success need not be defined by stressful schedules and rigid requirements. Globe makes even greater things possible for its G-Plan subscribers, as it redefines their very notion of success, as the power to do more, now. With the G-Plan opti-SIM, the promise of a more fulfilled life is within your reach. Seize the power to optimize your life by upgrading to Globe's G-Plan opti-SIM at all Globe Telecom Business Centers and Globe Hubs now!

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- **Access to myGlobe** – Get easy access to the various full menu service that caters to your every need like news, entertainment, financial information, mobile banking service, sports, traffic, weather, movies, music, fashion etc. It turns your Handyphone into a more productive gadget while you enjoy its various features.

Better living through optimism and G-Plan opti-SIM

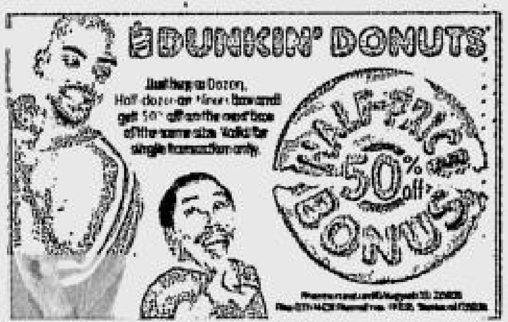
Even the busiest executive can now look forward to a freer, more fulfilling future with a little dose of optimism, and Globe's new 128K G-Plan opti-SIM. Here are some tips to optimizing your G-Plan opti-SIM to give you the freedom to live life on your terms:

Organize your schedule.
Personally keeping track of appointments and other important events can be tricky. For you not to miss any of your commitments, mark it in your myOrganizer calendar for urgent matters that you need to attend to. Putting your schedule in the myOrganizer calendar also helps you to check and block off dates right away and avoid the pressures of a hectic schedule. This way, you are reminded of important dates and events, yet still have time to do the things you want within a particular day.

Compartmentalize.
Separating your personal and business life will be a cinch for you if you arrange your contacts' phone numbers into separate folders. This will help you avoid the hassle of browsing through your phonebook one by one for a particular number and be able to retrieve it right away. You can have folders for your business contacts, a folder for food delivery numbers and another one for relatives and friends. Now you can make your address book work to your advantage and maximizing 750 entries of your SIM will be so effortless.

Free your mind.
Genius Albert Einstein was famous for lugging around big notepads since he never memorized things and preferred to write everything down on paper. His logic: the mind should not be burdened with too much information, freeing it up for more important activities. Today, thanks to the latest innovation from Globe, the G-Plan opti-SIM makes it possible to store additional 100 messages, boosting the capacity of your cellphone.

LIFESTYLE Home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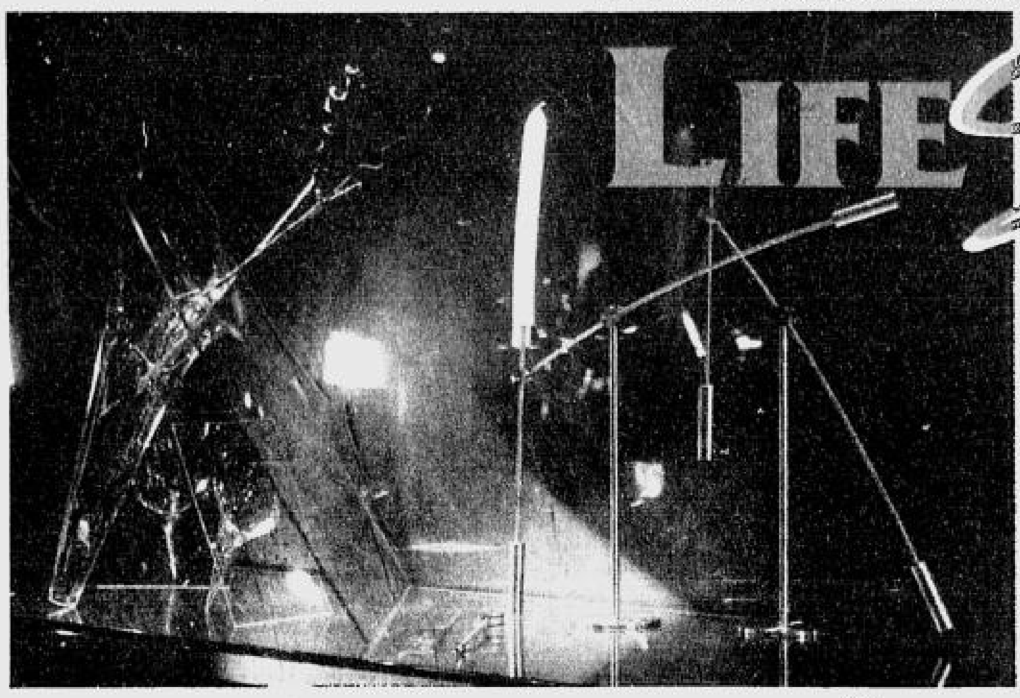
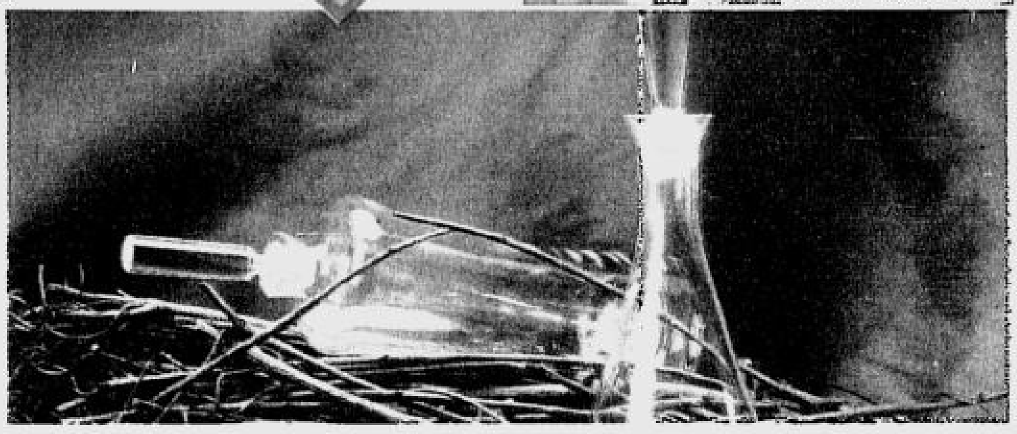
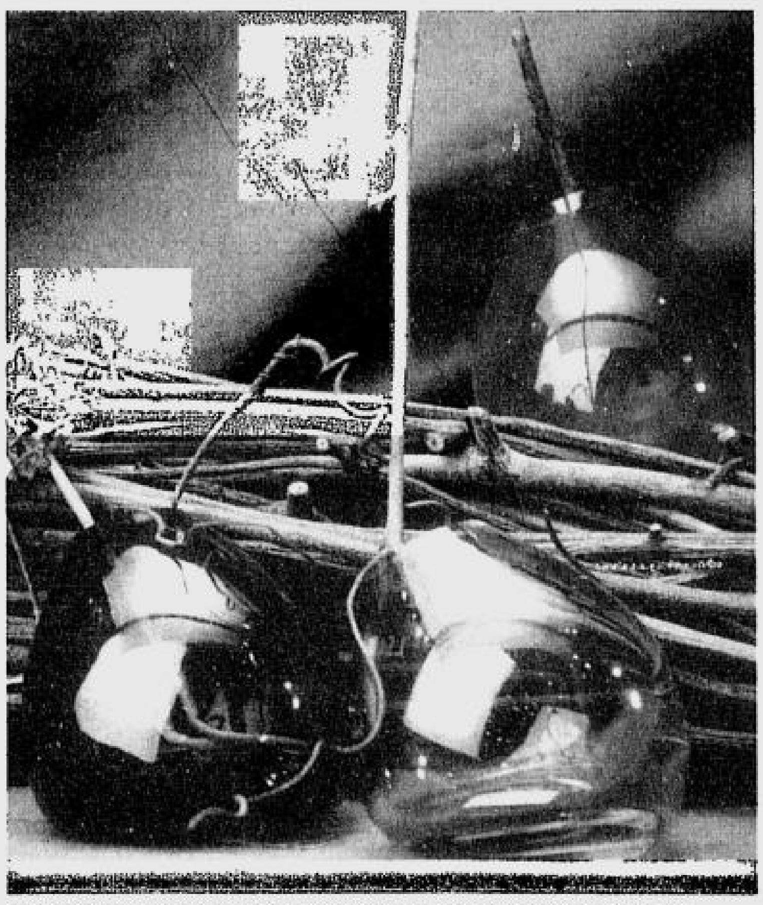




IGOR and Purcell decanters guaranteed to liven up a party

VANISHING Vase by Joris Sparenberg and Libra candlesticks by Emmiel Vaessen and Gert Jan Vogel



MIMI, the handmade vase that echoes arias even without a bud

New aesthetics for old traditions

THE OLD traditions of handmade glass are still used by LSA International, which is based in the United Kingdom, to make elegantly shaped vases, decanters and stemware that are just right for today's martini-siping set. Emmiel Vaessen and Gert Jan Vogel's cleverly designed candlestick has levers that move up as the candles burn, changing the look of the piece as time goes by. Joris Sparenberg's Vanishing Vase is a majestic sculptural piece, a star in its own right, yet polite enough to step aside and let your flowers and you have your 20 seconds of fame.

These things and more are available at Firma, G/F Greenbelt 3, Ayala Center, Makati, tel. 7574009, e-mail firma2@vasia.com.

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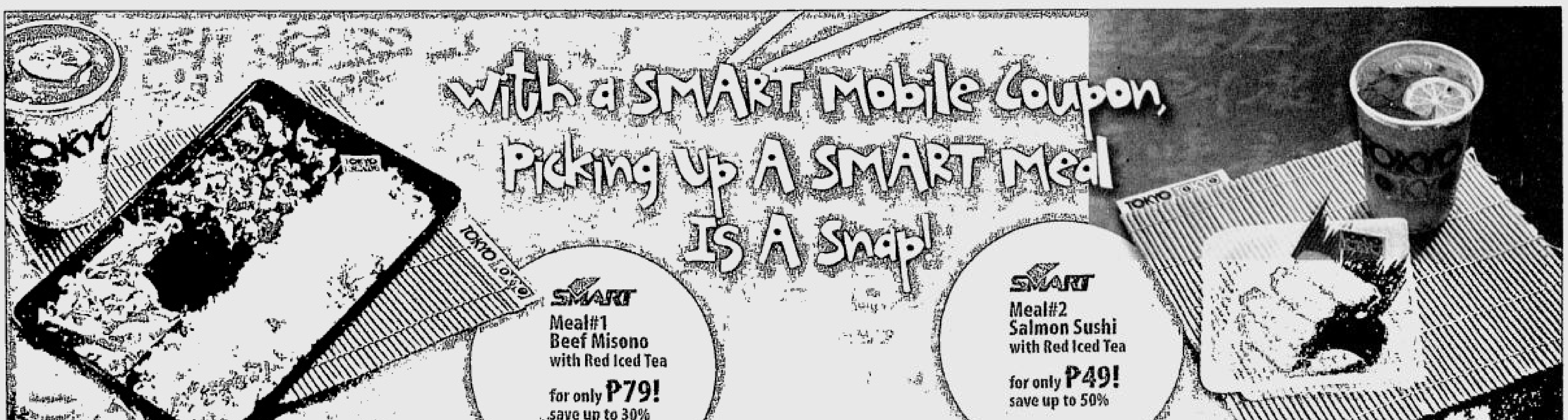
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NOZY single bed from Belgium. Beside it is a Fuji clock-cum-medicine cabinet and a frosted glass gliding door wardrobe cabinet from Switzerland.

GIANNI fabric on leather bed with glass side tables. A handmade carpet from India adorns the wall. Beside the bed is a gliding door wardrobe cabinet in frosted glass with mirror from Switzerland and swing velvet chairs from Italy.

GIGA fabric headboard with medium density fiber board with Giga side tables from Belgium

Furnishings to unwind instyle

LAVA sofa set with crystal glass center and side tables, all from Italy, and a Cola standing mirror

Text by Rowena C. Burgos
Photos by Roger Carpio

TODAY'S world is a busy one. So for Geena Llamanzares, general manager of Play and Display (tels. 8876363/8133045), the traditional style of home furnishings doesn't dovetail with the frenetic lifestyle.

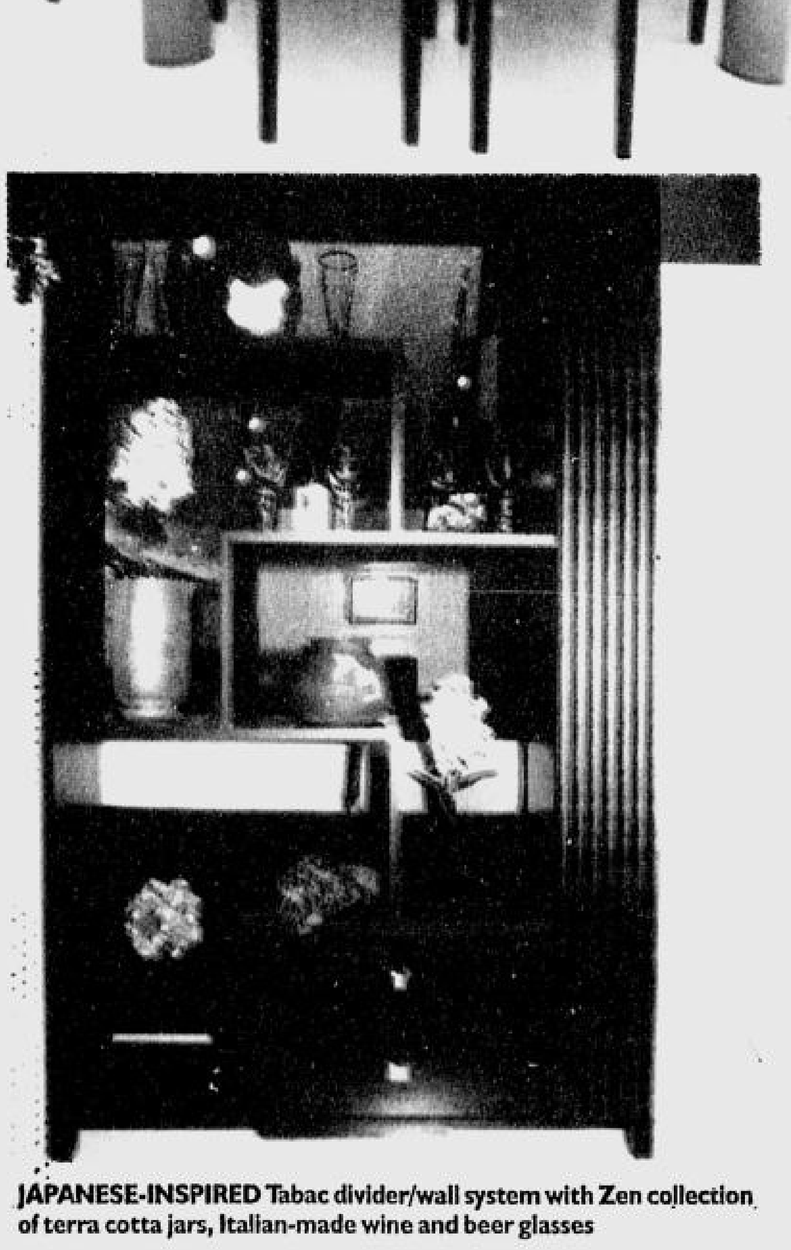
"A significant part of the market grew up with traditional designs," she says. "But because today's lifestyle is more casual, many people are now looking for something that combines both traditional and casual."

Llamanzares' frequent foreign trips have fueled her passion for classy home furniture and furnishings as well as "the desire to bring the world to every Filipino home."

So she put up Play and Display in 1998. It has since been showcasing furnishings for bedroom, dining room and living room that buyers can mix and match in any home.

Play and Display offers luxury furniture with a casual twist

FLORENCE dining set from Italy with Tori chairs. A Cola hanging mirror is displayed on a Cola display cabinet made of glass and wood. Beside the cabinet are edge bar stools from Italy. A Triomphe ceiling lamp from Italy lights the table.



JAPANESE-INSPIRED Tabac divider/wall system with Zen collection of terra cotta jars, Italian-made wine and beer glasses

Luxurious yet casual

Luxurious, but with a casual twist. That's the look of Play and Display's furnishings—beds, tables, dressers, wardrobes, chairs, sofas, sofa beds, cabinets, beddings, pillows, mattresses, ceramics, earthenware, glassware, kitchenware, dinnerware, lamps, woven and non-woven fabrics, artificial flowers, curtains, carpets, and rugs.

The furniture and decorative accessories are characterized by rich colors and fabrics. Darker shades of wood and leather are also components of the casual chic.

"Sophisticated looks with a casual feel are appealing to people right now," says Llamanzares. "They want their home to be a place where they can relax."

Because of the trend toward a more relaxed lifestyle, Llamanzares notes that the key phrase in shopping for pieces is "stylish yet practical."

This is why Play and Display offers "relaxed formal" and "sophisticated casual" furnishings, says Llamanzares. These include the Italian leather sofa line that consists of three models: D'Cota, Scandi and Maurice.

D'Cota has high armrests and silver metal legs. It has smooth lines which make it soft to touch and ideal to lounge in.

Scandi's high backs and armrests provide comfortable support for the body and neck.

Maurice has by-cast leather covering and square wooden legs with metal accent. It has sloping armrests but high back support.

The sofa frames are made of a mixture of natural beech wood, pear wood, walnut, mahogany and cherry wood with highly resistant elastic crossed webbing. The stuffing consists of polyurethane foam and resin in 100-percent polyester.

"People want furnishings and accessories that are beautifully designed, well-made and easy to coordinate," says Llamanzares. "And Play and Display allows them to integrate our pieces and their own treasured possessions."

Visually exciting

Play and Display's beautifully accessorized vignettes stimulate shoppers, who then focus less on how much furnishings cost and more on how much they like them.

"We're not selling just furniture, but flexibility and diversity, an idea center—the kind of place people visit to solve their decorating problems," Llamanzares says.

Recently, Play and Display was awarded the Most Outstanding Furniture Store 2003 in the 18th Annual National Consumers Excellence Awards and the Top Furniture and Furnishings Store 2003 in the 19th National Consumers Quality Awards.

"Play and Display has given people a place to unwind in style. The store's accents sell the furniture and the furniture sells the accents. It's a great marriage," Llamanzares says.

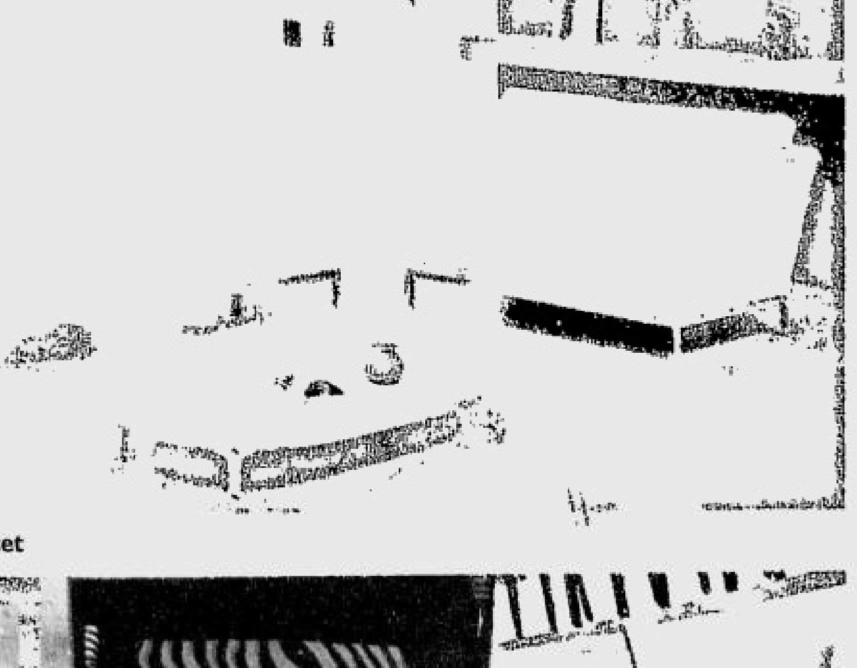
"Besides, our manufacturers have been designing furniture for longer-lasting use to make people's investments last a little longer."

Play and Display offers free interior design consultancy, lay-away plan and discounts on selected items.

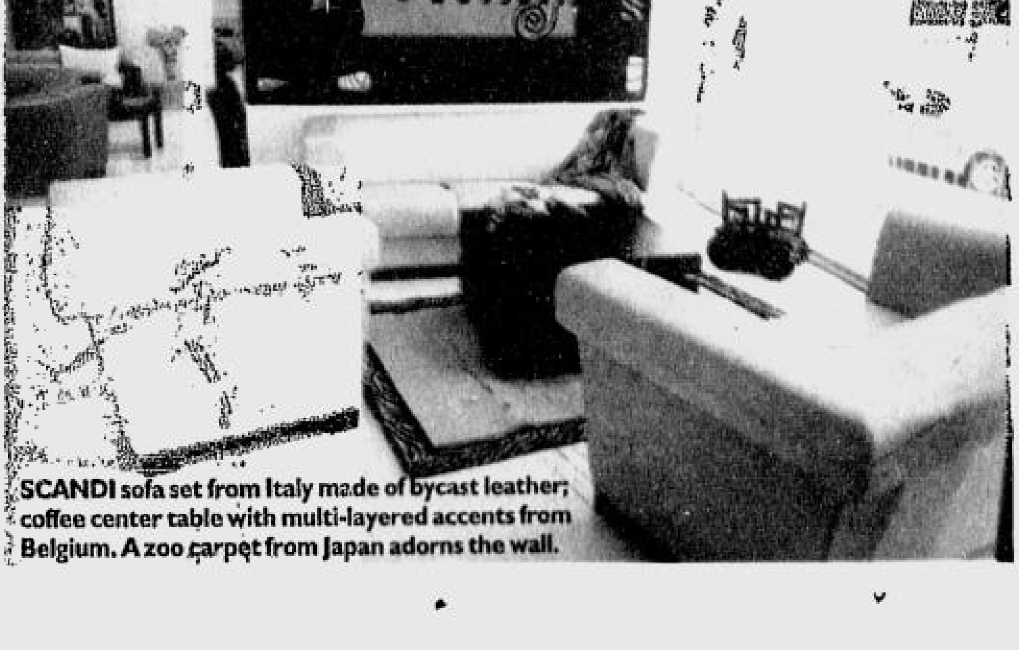
The store's outlets are located at 6797 Ayala Avenue, Glorietta 4 and Power Plant Mall, Rockwell, Makati; Shangri-La Plaza Mall and SM Megamall B, Mandaluyong; Alabang Town Center and Festival Supermall, Alabang; SM City North Edsa, QC; and SM City, Pampanga.

E-mail the author at rburgos@inquirer.com.ph

GEENA Llamanzares, general manager, says her store offers sophisticated casual pieces



D'COTA sofa set



SCANDI sofa set from Italy made of bycast leather; coffee center table with multi-layered accents from Belgium. A zoo carpet from Japan adorns the wall.

Separated woman has special 'friend'

LIVE AND LET LIVE

Tita Dulce

DEAR Tita Dulce,

I am a mother of a 10-month-old boy and have been married for more than a year now. I am blessed with a good education, supportive family and an untarnished name in our community. Many call me an achiever.

My problem now is two-pronged. I don't know which is more urgent.

My husband turned out to be irresponsible, inconsiderate, uncaring, just after we got married. He drastically changed, from the way he was during the five years he was my boyfriend. Was it because we had to get married because I was already pregnant?

Because I couldn't stand the way he is, I have been very miserable. I asked for separation. My parents (with whom we have been living since we got married) and his side talked it over and agreed that we should separate. They realized that soon after we got married, my husband left his job and had been idle ever since.

I became happier and more optimistic, but then something happened again.

A friend who had helped me during those troubled times suddenly expressed his love, and has been very caring. His dedication is awesome, his attention is so touching. I never imagined it would happen. We kept our friendship secret but when my parents learned about it, they freaked out. They suddenly accused him of being a gold digger, opportunist, drug pusher and many other bad things. They even had me tested for drugs but, of course, I passed. I'm not a drug addict. They had the funds I hold for my business audited and, again, everything was okay.

I felt that my parents had lost trust in me, but they simmered down after I passed the tests. They told me to stop "texting" this other man, and I obeyed, but we still kept in touch without them knowing. Maybe they don't like him because of his looks. He has a band, a tattoo and does not dress "decently" because that's his way of life.

Should I continue my ties with him and give our special friendship a chance? I think I already love him. My husband and I are already planning to get an annulment.

LINDA

When you are free again, that is when you can consider how special your 'friend' really is. In the meantime, keep your distance and don't do anything you might regret later

Keep cool, attend to your daily duties because you need to live for your future and that of your son. Since your husband has agreed to have your marriage annulled, consult a lawyer who specializes on those cases.

As to your other "friend," you can continue that friendship, but don't do anything you might regret later. Keep your distance while your annulment is still in court.

When you are free again, that is when you can consider how special your friendship really is. Is he just being nice and helpful, or will he propose marriage? If he does, then that is when you should weigh things seriously. Does he earn enough from being a band member. How does he treat your son? Will your parents welcome him? If he is really a deserving and properly cultured gentleman, they will. Good luck.

Butterflies as business

I am a senior student specializing in ecology and will graduate next year. I know that nowadays it is difficult to find a job and, since I am blessed with parents who have the means to help me with my ambitions, I have decided to put up a butterfly garden. This will be for biodiversity conservation, to provide an educational as well as enjoyable experience for the general public. I also hope to be able to breed enough so I can sell them to those interested.

I know that a butterfly garden demonstrates conservation, inter-relations of organism and environment (ecosystem) and biodiversity. A butterfly garden will remind everyone of the importance of nature. Can you recommend me to someone who is an expert in the field of insect ecology [entomology]?

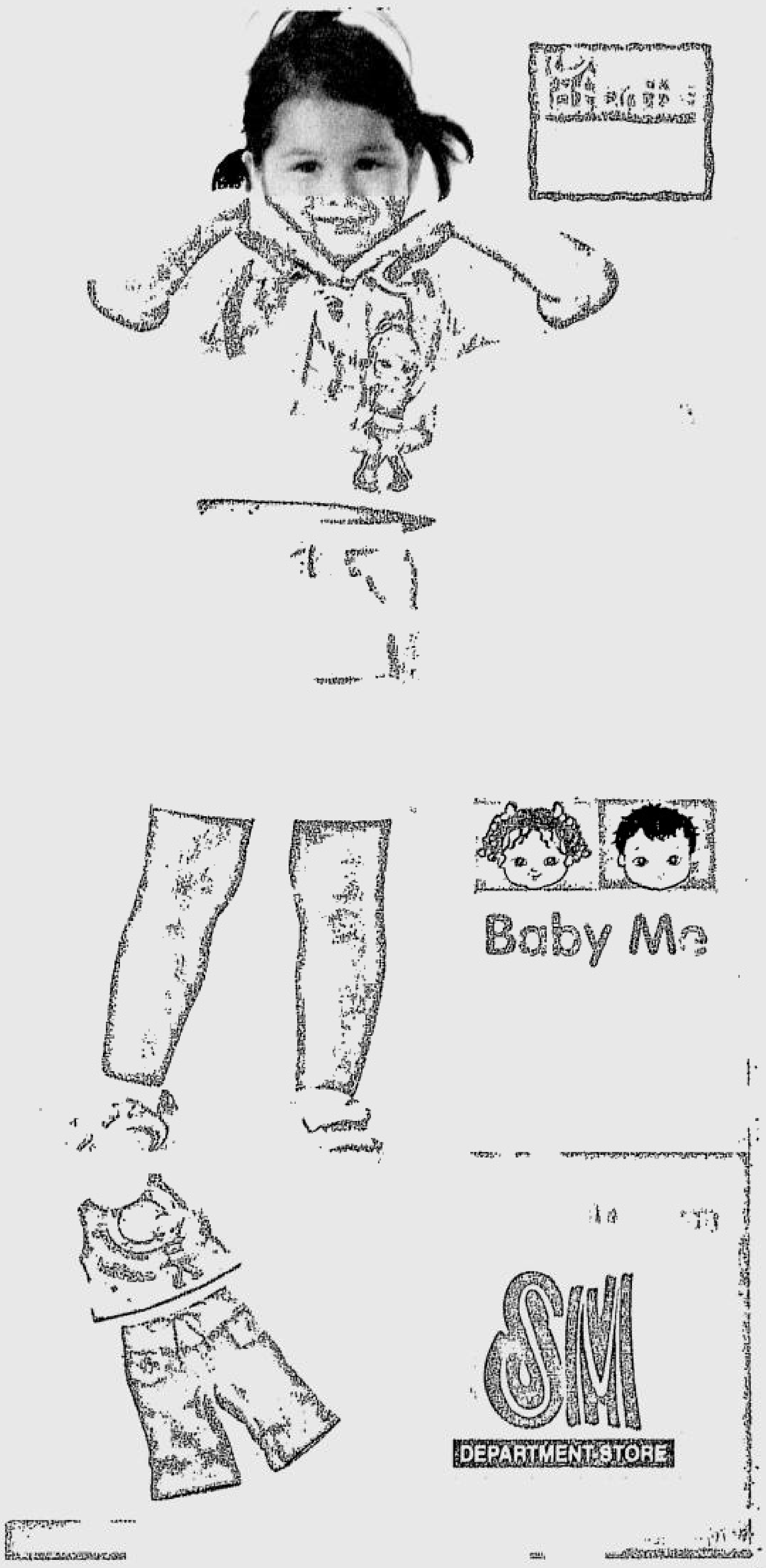
ALFRED

I'm no expert on the subject you mentioned, but I do enjoy looking at butterflies. I called up the Bureau of Plant Industry, Crop Protection Division in Malate. I was referred to Priscillano Salazar of the Insect Pest Management. He is the one you should consult. He is an entomologist, and you will be happy to know that he owns Montalban Butterfly Garden. You might want to see it in Amityville Subdivision in Montalban, Rizal.

When we talked on the phone, he told me a number of background information on having a butterfly garden: the design, supplies of butterfly eggs, larvae, pupae, etc., host plants like oranges, management of plant pests and bacteria, and other facts that you can ask him yourself. I asked him if butterflies would make good business (which you mentioned in your letter). He said adult butterflies were released during weddings, birthdays and other occasions. Mr. Salazar can also train you on butterfly farming and ranching.

Call him at 9979660, 7424868 or 5240765. His cell phone no. is 0918-5749776. Good luck. Just looking at butterflies give quiet and joyful moments. Learn to frame them as gifts but first, of course, produce hundreds of them, so they do not become endangered species.

E-mail titadulce@netscape.net or send letters to P.O. Box 2353, Makati CPO 1263 Makati City, or PDI, Chino Roces Avenue corner Yague and Mascardo Streets, Makati City



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TAKE THE SPICE TRIP WITH CHILI WINGS.
[illegible] sweetness. Deep fried golden chicken wings [illegible] Jollibee's Chili Wings. It's the hottest trip in town.
Jollibee

Unesco audits Philippine environment

NARDA N. Camacho has reason to be happy these days. She has just found out that Filipino local government units (LGUs), and Filipinos in general, are not as unconcerned about the environment as she once believed.

On the contrary, she says, the reports that she gets show that they do care. There are things happening in the provinces and countryside that we don't know about but which reflect this. Those reports bring hope that the Philippines may still be the Pearl of the Orient, especially since they come in the wake of other information to the contrary but is also true nonetheless.

Camacho's optimism in the midst of so much pollution and degradation, especially in urban areas, comes as a welcome relief. Environmentalists who have been plodding on in near-despair now have reason to hope. They are finding out that Filipinos do care about their rich natural resources after all, that while a lot of environmental abuse still goes on, such as illegal logging reported by the Environmental Broadcast Circle, there are people fighting it.

SEEING GREEN

Doris Gaskell Nuyda

Filipinos are doing something to conserve our biodiversity

The reason for Camacho's new-found joy is a survey—actually an audit and inventory—that she has initiated as commissioner of the United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (Unesco) Philippines for Science, Environment and Technology.

Data needed

She saw the need for an audit from Day One of her appointment last year, as none was made in the past. She felt no proper planning or assessment could be made of the needs of her particular sector without sufficient and accurate data.

CAMACHO

While her office could not start any actual project, the audit could give planners "a clear picture of what they could develop..." And so, it is important to know "what we have, what resources are available and what (the) conditions are."

Unesco Philippines and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources jointly prepared a survey form and sent it to the 79 provincial governors, 114 city mayors and 1,496 municipal mayors throughout the country. Survey forms were also sent to the regional and provincial presidents of the oldest and largest women's organization in the country, the National Federation of Women's Clubs of the Philippines, as well as to the national offices of Rural Improvement Clubs and the National Council of Women of the Philippines.

The first survey forms were sent out on May 30, and today, less than four months later, hundreds of replies have already been received. Among other things, the questionnaire seeks to find out if forests (upland, coastal, mangrove, mossy, etc.) exist in the province or town; what mountain ranges are nearby; rivers, lakes and springs that flow in the area; coastal and fishing grounds; tourist sites (man-made or natural); caves and underground rivers; wildlife sanctuaries; heritage and other nature sites; and descriptions of all these.

Heartening results

The replies, says Camacho, have been heartening. For instance, LGUs in Samar report that mangroves, once said to be disappearing, are being planted or replanted. In the Sierra Madre, forest trees are being replanted. In Catanduanes, rivers flow unpolluted. In Kalinga-Apayao, rice is being planted organically.

The reports also include illegal activity. Mention is made of the state of fishing in a far-flung island controlled by three powerful families who resort to illegal means for the heaviest catch, leaving very little for the other fisherfolk and their families. Letters from the Unesco to the AFP Chief of Staff are expected to prompt the Philippine Navy and Coast Guard into action to resolve the problem.

Camacho has also requested that a permanent Coast Guard detachment be detailed at a Batanes point where poachers are known to operate at night.

The audit, says Camacho, shows that something is being done to conserve our biodiversity, that the environmental picture does not always consist of illegal loggers, illegal fishers, air and water polluters and uncaring citizens, though these still exist. There are Filipinos who do care about their surroundings especially the things that have long been part of their lives. And when they realize that there are others interested in what's going on in their locality, they can be inspired to care even more.

This September, Camacho leaves for Paris to attend Unesco's annual meeting. She will be able to inform the delegates of the state of the environment in the Philippines as disclosed by initial results of the the audit so far. The state of a country's environment, after all, parallels the state of the nation as a whole, for it reflects our economy, social and cultural life and how we look at our selves.

Camacho, it must be noted, was appointed to the Unesco post largely by her reputation as an indefatigable environmentalist with her own non-government organization. She is chair of the Metro Manila Council of Women Balikatan Movement and executive director of the recycling movement known as Linis Ganda.

E-mail the author at dorisnuyda@yahoo.com

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Furniture Section
SUPERMAT 5.08 x 71.12 x 190 cm (2 x 28 x 75 in) with a minimum purchase of P5,000 in a single receipt at the Furniture Section
August 17 - 23
FOREST TABLE and CHAIRS with a minimum purchase of P20,000 in a single receipt at the Furniture Section
August 16 - 31
*Receipts used to avail of HOME SALE FREE GIFTS are no longer valid for the 3-DAY SALE GIFT WITH PURCHASE promotion
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Sale 13,750 reg. 17,850 Collins Sofa Set (3-seater / 2-seater)
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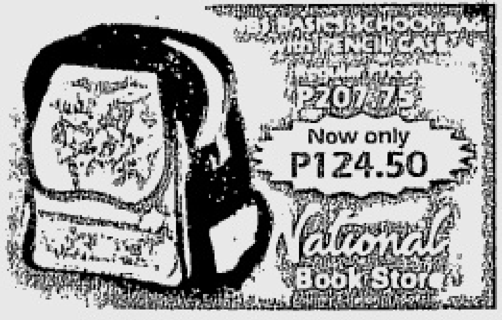
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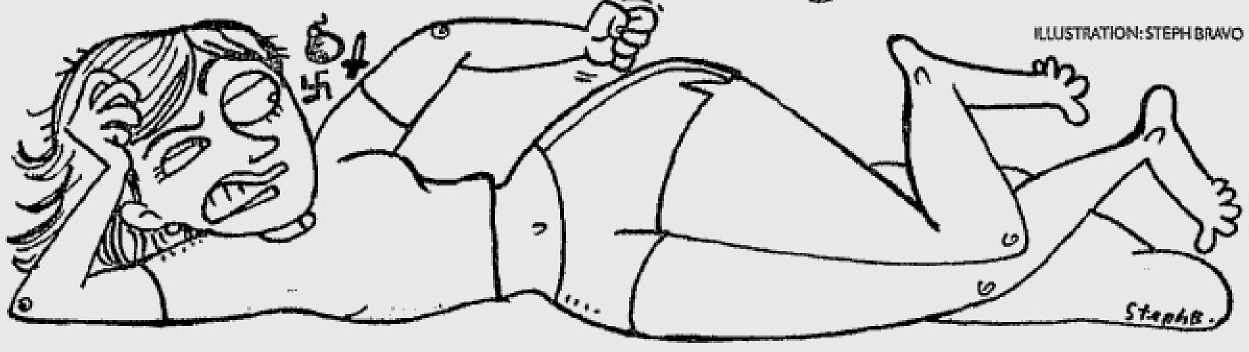

ILLUSTRATION: STEPH BRAVO

Dressing a pear-shaped figure and reinventing a 'manang'

APPLES' PICKINGS

Apples Aberin-Sadhwani

PEOPLE always advice me to dress according to my body type, but I feel that this is so limiting. I am pear-shaped and tired of wearing black bottoms and ordinary white tops. Can you give me advice on what I can wear without compromising my style and personality?

It is important to wear clothes that suit your pear-shaped figure simply because this is the best way to create the right proportion, disguise flaws

DRESSING/ E3

Make sure you maintain the right silhouette while wearing the latest trends or clothes that express your personality

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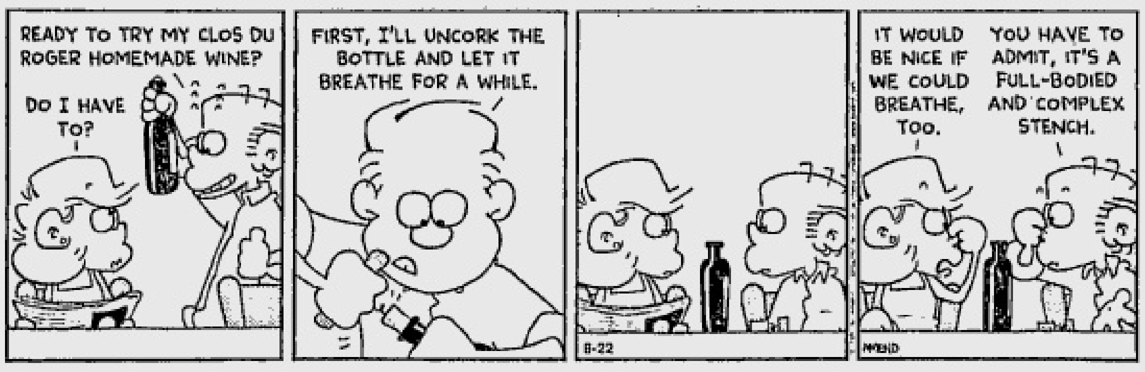
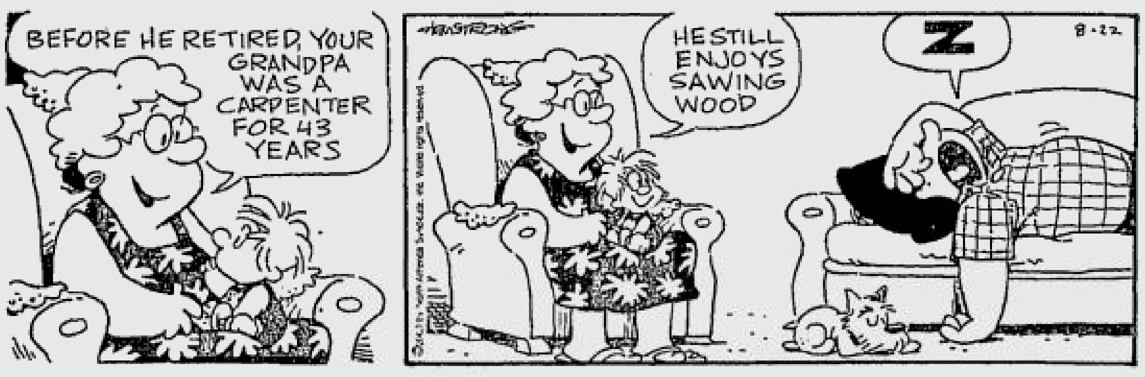
FOXTROT

BY BILL AMEND


READY TO TRY MY CLOS DU ROGER HOMEMADE WINE?
DO I HAVE TO?
FIRST, I'LL UNCORK THE BOTTLE AND LET IT BREATHE FOR A WHILE.
8-22
IT WOULD BE NICE IF WE COULD BREATHE, TOO.
YOU HAVE TO ADMIT, IT'S A FULL-BODIED AND COMPLEX STENCH.
AMEND

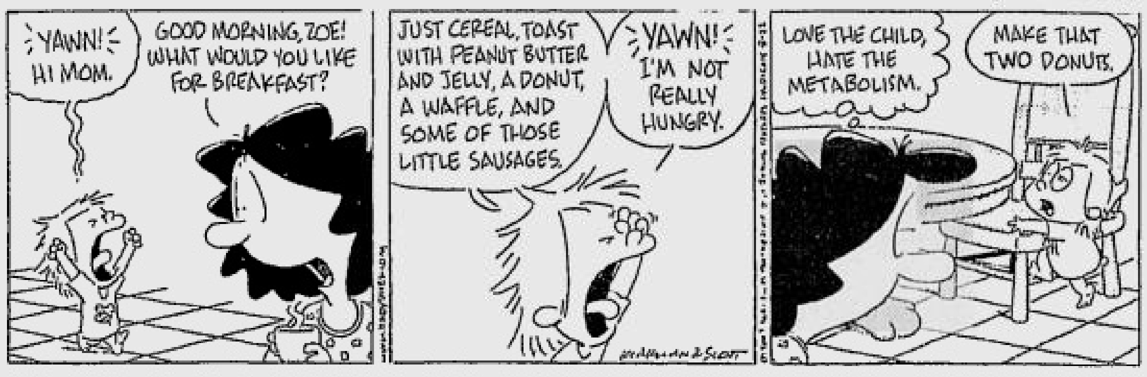
MARVIN

BY TOM ARMSTRONG


BEFORE HE RETIRED, YOUR GRANDPA WAS A CARPENTER FOR 43 YEARS
ARMSTRONG
HE STILL ENJOYS SAWING WOOD
Z
8-22

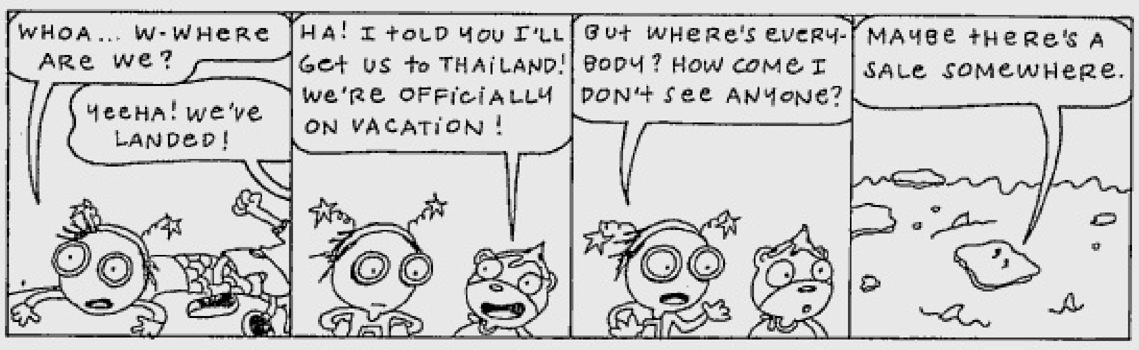
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


YAWN! HI MOM.
GOOD MORNING, ZOE! WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE FOR BREAKFAST?
JUST CEREAL, TOAST WITH PEANUT BUTTER AND JELLY, A DONUT, A WAFFLE, AND SOME OF THOSE LITTLE SAUSAGES.
YAWN! I'M NOT REALLY HUNGRY.
LOVE THE CHILD, HATE THE METABOLISM.
MAKE THAT TWO DONUTS.

ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


WHOA... W-WHERE ARE WE?
YEEHA! WE'VE LANDED!
HA! I TOLD YOU I'LL GET US TO THAILAND! WE'RE OFFICIALLY ON VACATION!
BUT WHERE'S EVERYBODY? HOW COME I DON'T SEE ANYONE?
MAYBE THERE'S A SALE SOMEWHERE.

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You have an unusual combination of imagination and realism. This gives you a talent for expressing yourself. You are earthy and will always spurn pretense. You appreciate the talents of others and are patient at mapping out your own career path. The year ahead could be one of the most favorable years of your life. Go after what you want. **Birthdate of:** Dorothy Parker, writer; Cindy Williams, actress; John Lee Hooker, blues musician.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): This is a fabulous day for a party or any social occasion. You feel flirtatious, attractive and witty. Enjoy your day! And share your enthusiasm with others.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): This is an excellent day to make any kind of real estate deal. It's also a very good day to make purchases for your home or family members. Whatever you do will increase your wealth.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): You will enjoy studying or discussing mind-expanding subjects today. Philosophical concepts, religious ideas and theories about medicine or other cultures intrigue you.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): This is a wonderful day for business and commerce. Don't be afraid to act. Whatever you set in motion will only benefit you in the future.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): This is an extremely positive day with the potential for future growth in some way. You want to have all kinds of new experiences. You feel the need to broaden your life and enlarge your world.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): The energy surrounding you today reminds you that you cannot ignore your soft heart and your spiritual world. There is much more to life than meets the eye.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): Social occasions with friends, clubs, groups and organizations are extremely successful today. You have the ability to organize and direct the activities of others.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): This is a wonderful day to boost your career or your good name among your peers. Lucky fortune blesses you now. This is why you must act!

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Travel opportunities might delay you today. Similarly, everything having to do with publishing, the media and higher education pleases you and brings you expanding opportunities.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): Yet again, you are blessed through the wealth or favors of others. This is a great day to ask for something—a loan, permission, the use of something, whatever.

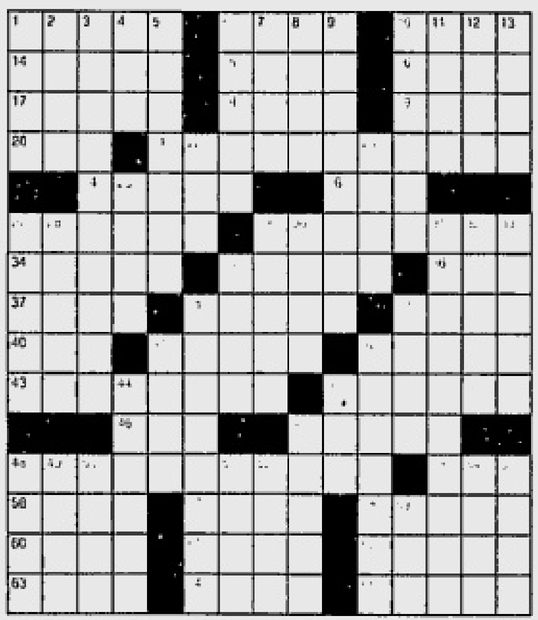
AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): You find it easy to be bighearted and generous to others today. Whatever you do brings you respect and praise from partners and friends.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): This is a wonderful day at work. Things go smoothly because you're lucky. Everything having to do with business and commercial transactions is profitable today and in the future.

DAILY CROSSWORD

ACROSS
1 American in April to the IRS
6 Guitar gadget
10 Spigots
14 Got up
15 Scandinavian saint
16 Saintly glow
17 Traffic diverters
18 Ms. McClurg
19 Rocker Billy
20 Lang. course
21 Iowa city
24 Smudges
26 Payable on demand
27 More lean and sinewy
29 Bigheaded ones
34 Highways and byways
35 Kirby of "City Slickers"
36 Even score
37 Travelers' stops
38 French river
39 Dressing gown
40 Twitch
41 Hovel
42 Filleted
43 Quantities of cream cheese?
45 Woodland deities
46 Mighty hardwood
47 Show-biz notable
48 Michigan city
53 TV brand
56 2002 Olympics site
57 __ Bator, Mongolia
58 Love in Limousin
60 Short letter
61 Liquid measure
62 Daughter of Tantalus
63 Rigging support
64 Boozers
65 _ _ alive!

DOWN
1 Visage
2 Press
3 New Jersey city
4 WNW's opposite
5 Saves
6 Female students, once
7 Robert or Alan
8 Couple
9 Carried too far
10 Taiwan capital
11 BMW competitor
12 Goad
13 Magie and Mineo
22 Do wrong
23 Graph lead-in
25 Covers
27 Legal documents
28 Type of column
29 Idle and Lindros
30 Messy substance
31 New York city
32 Rome's river
33 Burpee order
35 Grin and _ it
38 Drastic reorganizations
39 Memorization by repetition
41 Close tightly
42 Albania, Bulgaria, etc
44 John Lennon song
45 Behold
47 Pennies
48 Bakery purchase
49 On the apex of
50 Bye-bye!
51 Muse of history
52 Harangue
54 Rubik's toy
55 Militant deity
59 Actress Farrow



By Robert Zimmerman
San Diego, CA
8/22/03

Thursday's Puzzle Solved

D	A	V	E	■	S	H	O	E	S	■	R	O	P	E
A	L	E	X	■	H	I	N	T	S	■	E	D	I	T
D	A	S	H	I	E	L	L	H	A	M	M	E	T	T
S	I	T	A	R	■	[illegible]	Y	E	■	A	O	R	T	A
■	■	■	[illegible]	O	B	E	■	R	E	S	T	■	■	■
J	U	[illegible]	A	N	F	L	E	E	T	■	F	R	A	S
U	R	A	N	I	A	■	P	A	C	A	■	A	G	A
N	O	L	T	E	■	A	S	[illegible]	■	N	A	I	L	S
E	N	L	■	[illegible]	O	L	O	■	[illegible]	A	B	L	E	S
S	O	T	[illegible]	■	J	A	M	E	S	H	A	[illegible]	T	Y
■	■	■	A	T	O	M	■	T	E	E	N	■	■	■
H	A	[illegible]	[illegible]	O	■	E	D	E	■	I	D	L	E	S
E	A	R	L	O	F	D	A	R	T	M	O	U	T	H
F	R	E	E	■	[illegible]	A	I	N	E	■	[illegible]	A	R	A
S	P	E	L	■	A	S	S	E	T	■	[illegible]	U	E	D

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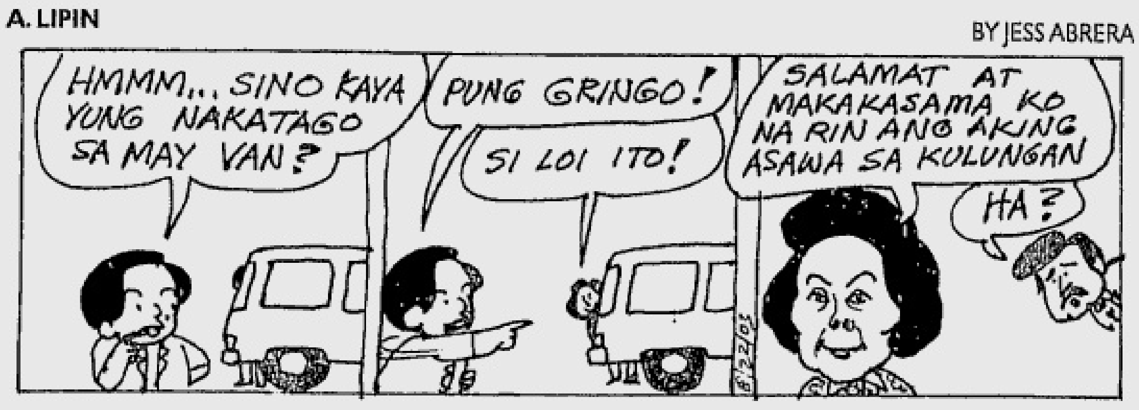
8/22/03

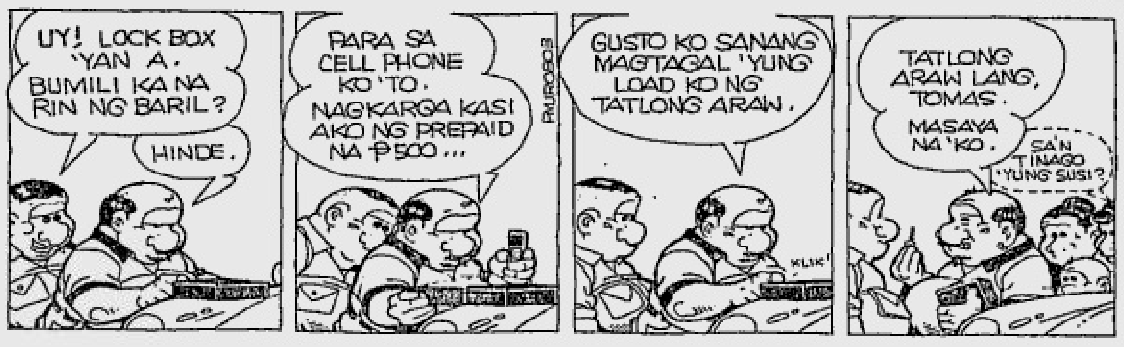
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


HMMM... SINO KAYA YUNG NAKATAGO SA MAY VAN?
PUNG GRINGO!
SI LOI ITO!
8/22/03
SALAMAT AT MAKAKASAMA KO NA RIN ANG AKING ASAWA SA KULUNGAN
HA?

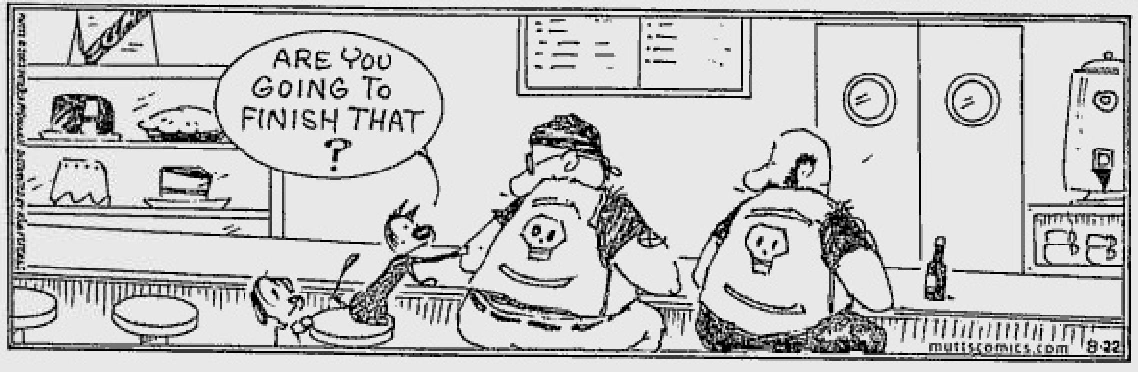
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


UY! LOCK BOX 'YAN A. BUMILI KA NA RIN NG BARIL?
HINDE.
PARA SA CELL PHONE KO 'TO. NAGKARGA KASI AKO NG PREPAID NA ₱500...
PMJR0803
GUSTO KO SANANG MAGTAGAL 'YUNG LOAD KO NG TATLONG ARAW.
KLIK!
TATLONG ARAW LANG, TOMAS. MASAYA NA 'KO.
SA'N TINAGO 'YUNG SUSI?

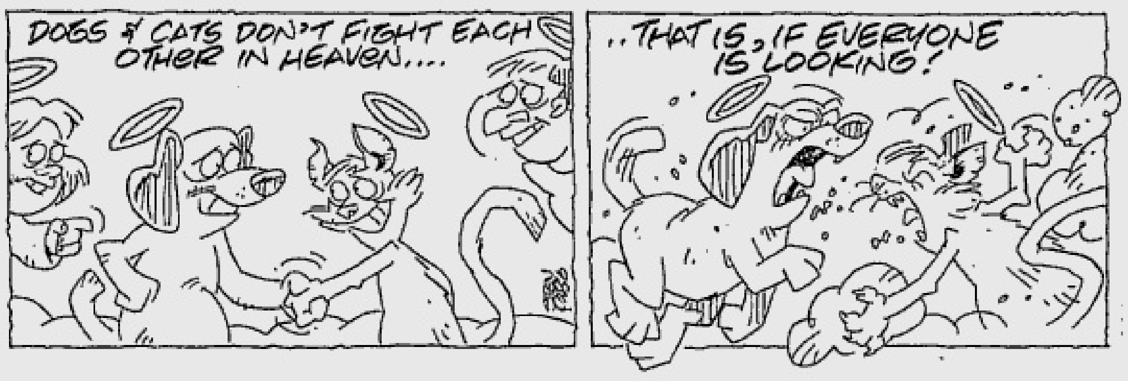
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


ARE YOU GOING TO FINISH THAT ?
muttscomics.com
8-22

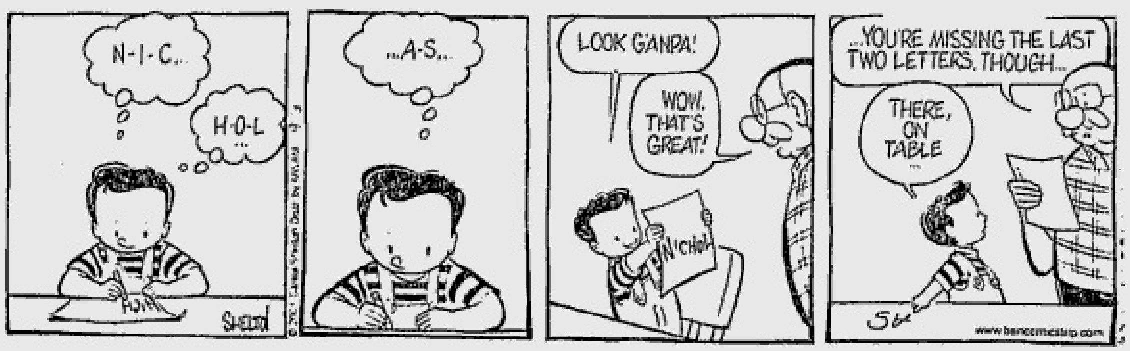
DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABALINAS


DOGS & CATS DON'T FIGHT EACH OTHER IN HEAVEN....
..THAT IS, IF EVERYONE IS LOOKING!

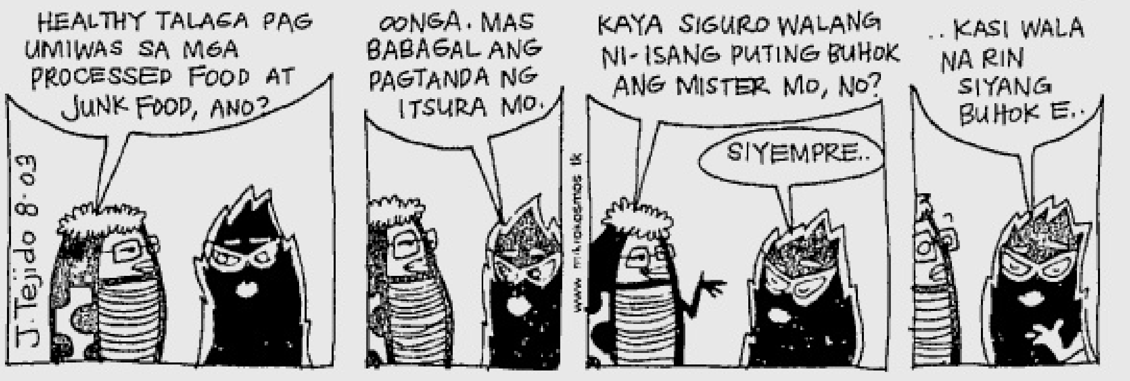
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


N-I-C..
H-O-L
...A-S...
LOOK G'ANPA!
WOW. THAT'S GREAT!
NICHOL
...YOU'RE MISSING THE LAST TWO LETTERS, THOUGH...
THERE, ON TABLE
www.bencomicstrip.com

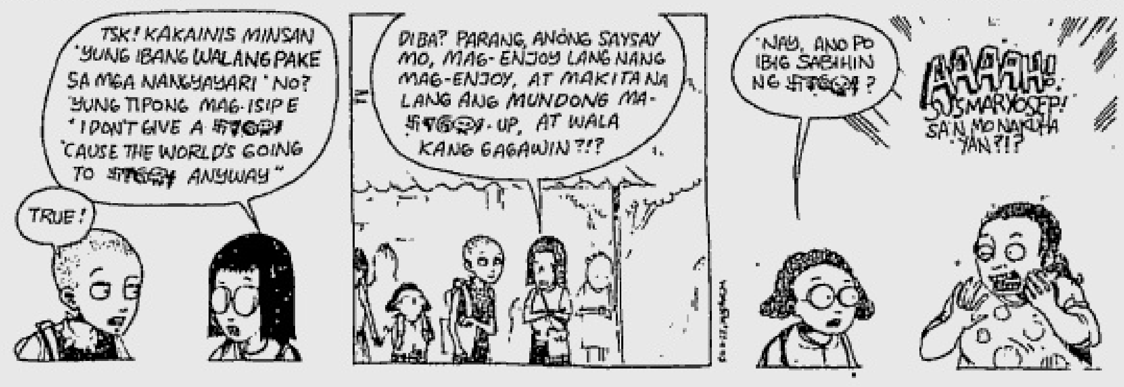
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


HEALTHY TALAGA PAG UMIWAS SA MGA PROCESSED FOOD AT JUNK FOOD, ANO?
J. Tejido 8·03
OONGA. MAS BABAGAL ANG PAGTANDA NG ITSURA MO.
KAYA SIGURO WALANG NI-ISANG PUTING BUHOK ANG MISTER MO, NO?
SIYEMPRE..
..KASI WALA NA RIN SIYANG BUHOK E..

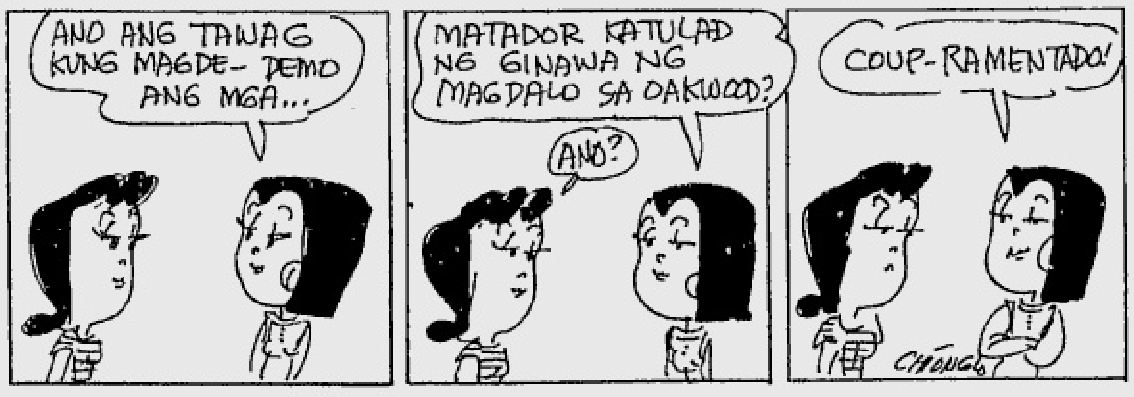
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


TSK! KAKAINIS MINSAN 'YUNG IBANG WALANG PAKE SA MGA NANGYAYARI 'NO? 'YUNG TIPONG MAG-ISIP E "I DON'T GIVE A $#@% 'CAUSE THE WORLD'S GOING TO $#@% ANYWAY"
TRUE!
DIBA? PARANG, ANONG SAYSAY MO, MAG-ENJOY LANG NANG MAG-ENJOY, AT MAKITA NA LANG ANG MUNDONG MA-$#@%-UP, AT WALA KANG GAGAWIN?!?
'NAY, ANO PO IBIG SABIHIN NG $#@%?
AAAAH! SUSMARYOSEP! SA'N MO NAKUHA 'YAN?!?

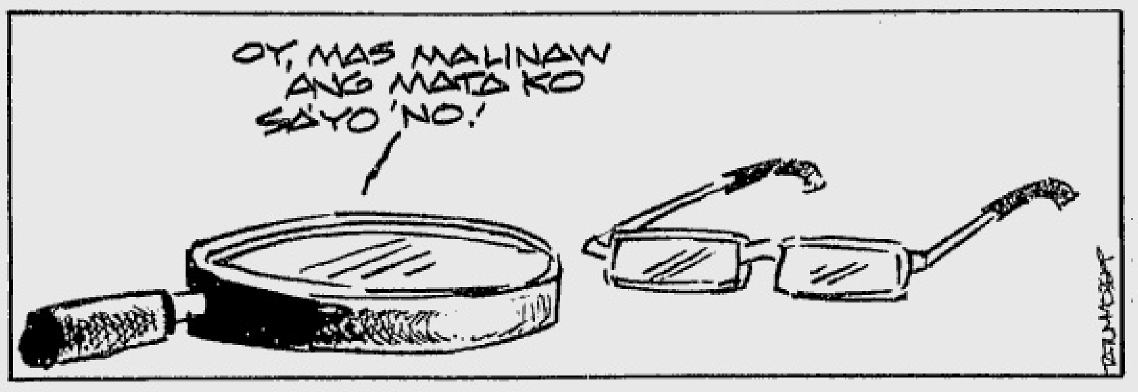
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


ANO ANG TAWAG KUNG MAGDE-DEMO ANG MGA...
MATADOR KATULAD NG GINAWA NG MAGDALO SA OAKWOOD?
ANO?
COUP-RAMENTADO!
CHIONGLO

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


OY, MAS MALINAW ANG MATA KO SA'YO 'NO!

Dressing a pear-shaped figure and reinventing a 'manang'

From page E1

and accentuate your best features.

However, you must never let this get in the way of expressing yourself.

It may sound far-fetched, but it is possible. All you have to do is to find a good balance between dressing according to your body type and your personality. Add to that a basic knowledge about what pieces are best suited for your pear-shaped body and you are well on your way to a stylish new you.

The silhouette of your clothing should be the main consideration in this particular case. So keep in mind that as a general rule, it is best to avoid form-fitting styles that hug the body and pull in all the wrong places.

For example, A-line skirts or flared skirts with vertical seams are more slimming than pencil skirts that will only emphasize your hips. Cuffed pinstripe trousers, on the other hand, are perfect for balancing your shape as opposed to high-waisted, slim-legged styles and plaid patterns.

And when choosing dresses, pick designs like a full cut sheath that flow loosely over the hips.

Since you are tired of wearing noncolors like black and white, invest in tops and bottoms in this season's jewel tones. Or take advantage of the men's wear mania by wearing jackets that will broaden your shoulders and trousers that will balance off your hips.

You can also go ultra-feminine by injecting one subtly sexy piece like a camisole worn with your men's wear-inspired suit, an A-line lace dress under a tuxedo jacket for evenings out or accent pieces like dainty lace pumps or a pretty pastel clutch.

It really all depends on what pieces suit your personality, what image you want to project and what your mood dictates.

It will also help to remember that dark colors, monochromatic hues and vertical lines are slimming. And It is best to avoid bulky fabrics like tweed, corduroy and heavy knits that add bulk to your figure, large patterns and horizontal lines that cut you in half and widen your figure.

But don't let these so-called rules limit you. Always trust your instincts or ask a fashionable friend to help you out. Just make sure you maintain the right silhouette while following the latest trends or wearing things that communicate your personality.

And as I always say, enjoy yourself in the process of reinventing your style. The most stylish women are never afraid to express themselves in spite of their flaws, so let that inspire you into doing the very same thing.

My friends say that I dress in a very plain and conservative manner (I'm a "*manang*," in short). This is probably because I refuse to wear anything that bares too much skin and clothes that call too much attention. I would really appreciate it if you could feature some tips, for both casual and corporate wear, on how I can dress in a fashionable and elegant yet simple manner. By the way, I'm a fresh graduate who is currently job-hunting.

Wearing clothes that show a lot of skin and scream "Look at me!" does not translate to being fashionable. One can be ultra-conservative and still look chic and sharp. The key is in learning to wear pieces that show your style and add oomph to your wardrobe.

The good news is that proper, subtly sexy, lady-like dressing a la Audrey Hepburn is back in the forefront of fashion. Because you are on the conservative side, I would say that this is the best fashion route for you to take.

Start watching all those old Hepburn films like "Roman Holiday," "Sabrina" and "Breakfast at Tiffany's" to draw inspiration from this all-time fashion icon.

No, you do not have to follow her look from head to toe. Simply pick out pieces that reflect your personality and match these with your existing wardrobe.

When job-hunting, why not wear a lady-like jacket that's cinched at the waist, matched with a pair of basic slim pants or a pencil-style skirt?

Accessorize this with a pretty pair of pumps with a bag to match to project this season's pulled-together style. Complete this polished look by donning strands of pearls or charm bracelets, worn separately, of course.

For casual days, you can try wearing Capri pants, simple tees or polo shirts and ballet flats with wide hoop earrings or pearl studs. Or enjoy the '60s trend by matching your blue jeans with a graphic, mod-inspired polo shirt.

To dress well means making a look your own. So even if you take pieces from this season's collection or use the likes of Audrey Hepburn to jumpstart your style radar, always make sure that you are comfortable. Being yourself and wearing things with confidence will ultimately translate to style.

E-mail the author at apsadvice@hotmail.com

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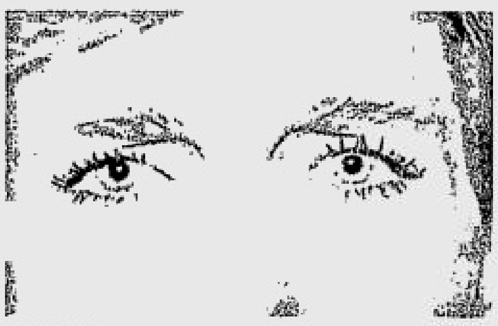
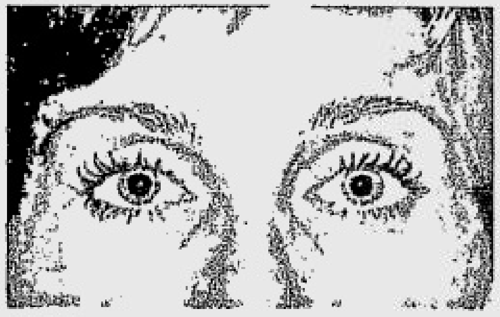


BEFORE



AFTER

Pulchritude...

From page E4

benefits. Ideal for those with oily skin.

Cell block C (P500 for a one-oz tube) is a non-greasy moisturizing sunblock with vitamin C. I just wished they specified what the SPF was and if it covers UVA, UVB and infrared. The product eliminates the need for foundation because it evens out the skin tone on the face and neck (yes, my skin got fairer in certain areas, so I guess UVB is covered). It feels like a base and holds makeup together, so all you need is powder to set everything. Smells good too!

The BC product I look forward to trying is the Microderm Abrasion Skin Buffering System. Tupperware, please bring it to the Philippines!

Call 8885521 or 8454798 for Beauticontrol, and 8177178 or your dermatologist for Botox treatments.

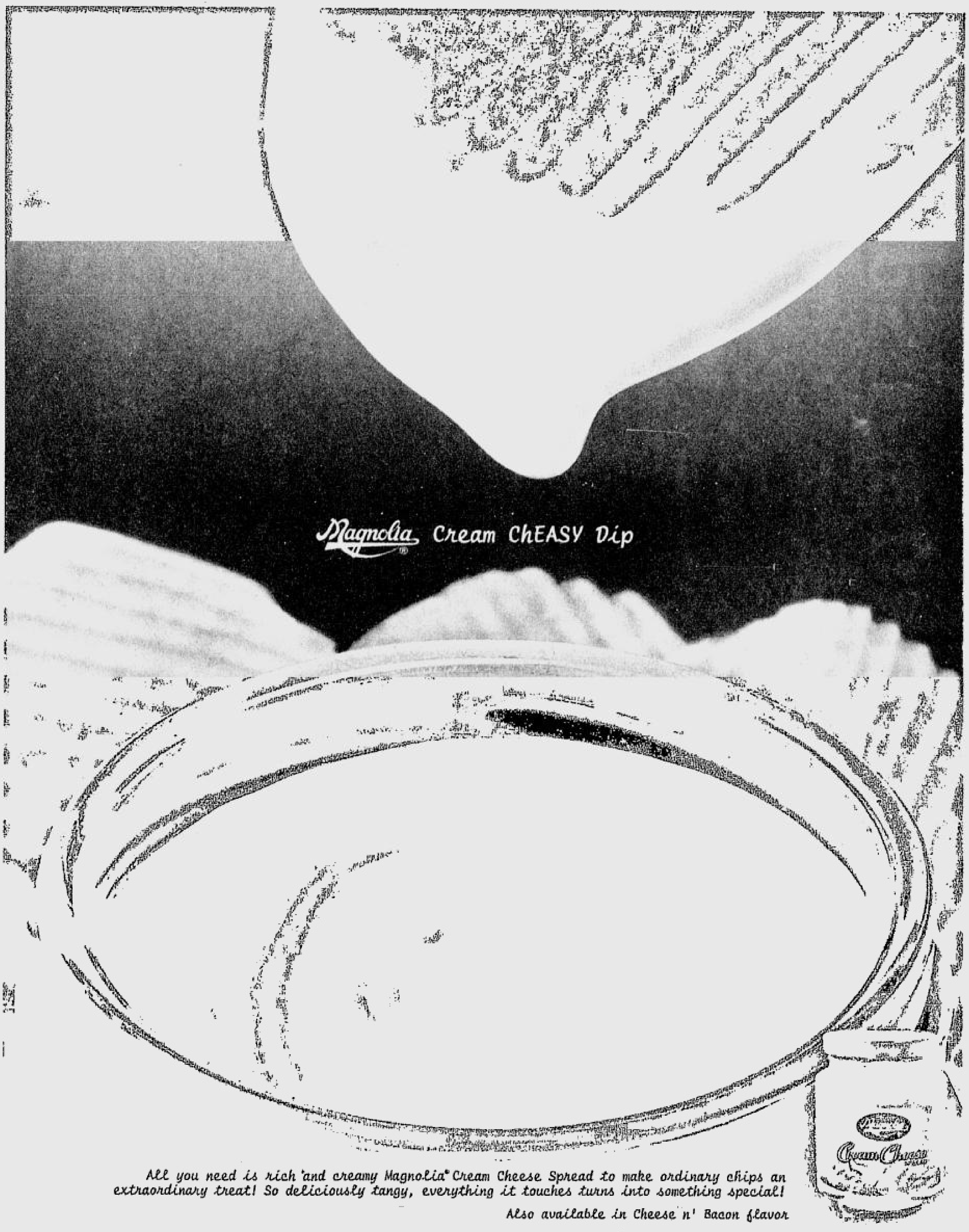
Win gift certificates or free makeovers

DISCOUNTS of up to 50 percent is being given on a wide range of beauty products at Robinsons Department Store's (RDS) annual Cosmetics Fair Aug. 16-31.

On sale are international and local cosmetics, hair care products, skin care items and perfumes.

Interesting prizes also await shoppers. Customers get a chance to win P50,000 worth of gift certificates or a free makeover from David's Salon. Every P200 purchase during the fair entitles a customer to a raffle coupon. Winners will be drawn on Sept. 15 at RDS' head office.

RDS' Cosmetics Fair is ongoing in all RDS branches nationwide.



Magnolia Cream ChEASY Dip
All you need is rich and creamy Magnolia® Cream Cheese Spread to make ordinary chips an extraordinary treat! So deliciously tangy, everything it touches turns into something special!
Also available in Cheese n' Bacon flavor

Pulchritude at the end of a needle

MAKEOVER 911

Kinny Salas

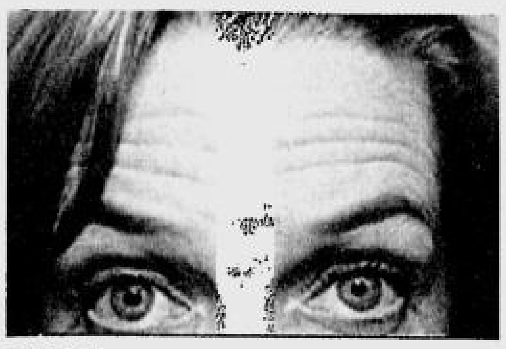
ALLERGAN, the sole distributor of Botulinum Toxin Type A (aka Botox) worldwide, recently threw its first Botox Party in the Philippines. These parties have been going on in the US since early last year, and have been very successful with both men and women who desire to smoothen out lines formed by their most frequent facial expressions.

For those who don't yet know what Botox is, it's an injectable fluid that was originally used to fix facial ticks and body spasms and was approved by the US FDA in 1989. The following year, a cosmetic dermatologist discovered that when Botox is used on the deep corrugated lines on the forehead caused by the frequent raising of eyebrows, the muscle relaxes and gets paralyzed. The person is thus unable to wrinkle his forehead again, and the lines smoothen out and disappear.

According to Dr. Vicki Belo, Allergan's party hostess of choice, Botox has more to do with our most frequent facial expressions which cause the lines to deepen, rather than with the general effects of aging. That's why she has clients who are as young as 20 who have had their squint lines and crow's feet, forehead lines and eyebrow furrows injected.

After a hearty lunch, the Belo Group of Doctors did Botox injections on those who were scheduled for treatment.

There is very little pain (quite like an ant bite) in Botox injections because it uses a micro-needle only on certain areas on the upper third of the face. Treating the lines of the mouth area is discouraged, because the patient will eventually be robbed of facial expressions.



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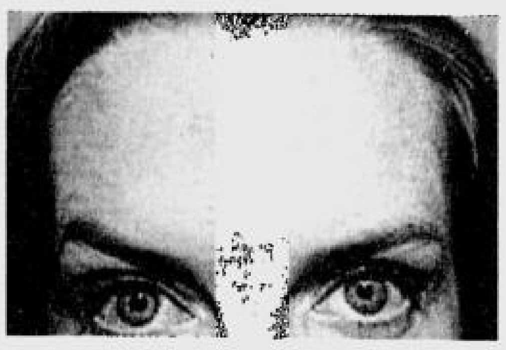


AFTER

Botox injections are an easy, almost painless way to smoothen facial wrinkles, crow's feet and squint lines

The upside: There is no waiting time. You walk into and out of the clinic in about 10 minutes, with no sedation. And people need not know you had anything done to your face.

The downside: Botox is temporary, and will have to be redone every four months. If not done properly, the patient's eyelid could droop temporarily (or for the entire four-month duration).

Some people have had mild bruising after treatment, but this can easily be covered by concealer.

For safe results, Dr. Belo advises patients to go to a reputable doctor.

Tupperware's Beauticontrol

Tupperware, the company famous for its plastic food containers, has expanded into beauty products.

It's now the local distributor of Beauticontrol, a brand that has its own big following in the US. Though not all BC products are available in the Philippines, I have chosen some favorites from among the samples I was given.

The Spa Body Wash and Lotion (P499 each) both have actual mineral and sea salt extracts from the Dead Sea. The smell is very clean and fits both sexes, so it won't clash with your cologne.

The Revitalizing Face Scrub (P375) effectively lifts dead skin cells. I have reservations in recommending this to those with sensitive skin, but if you can handle the abrasive feeling, go for it!

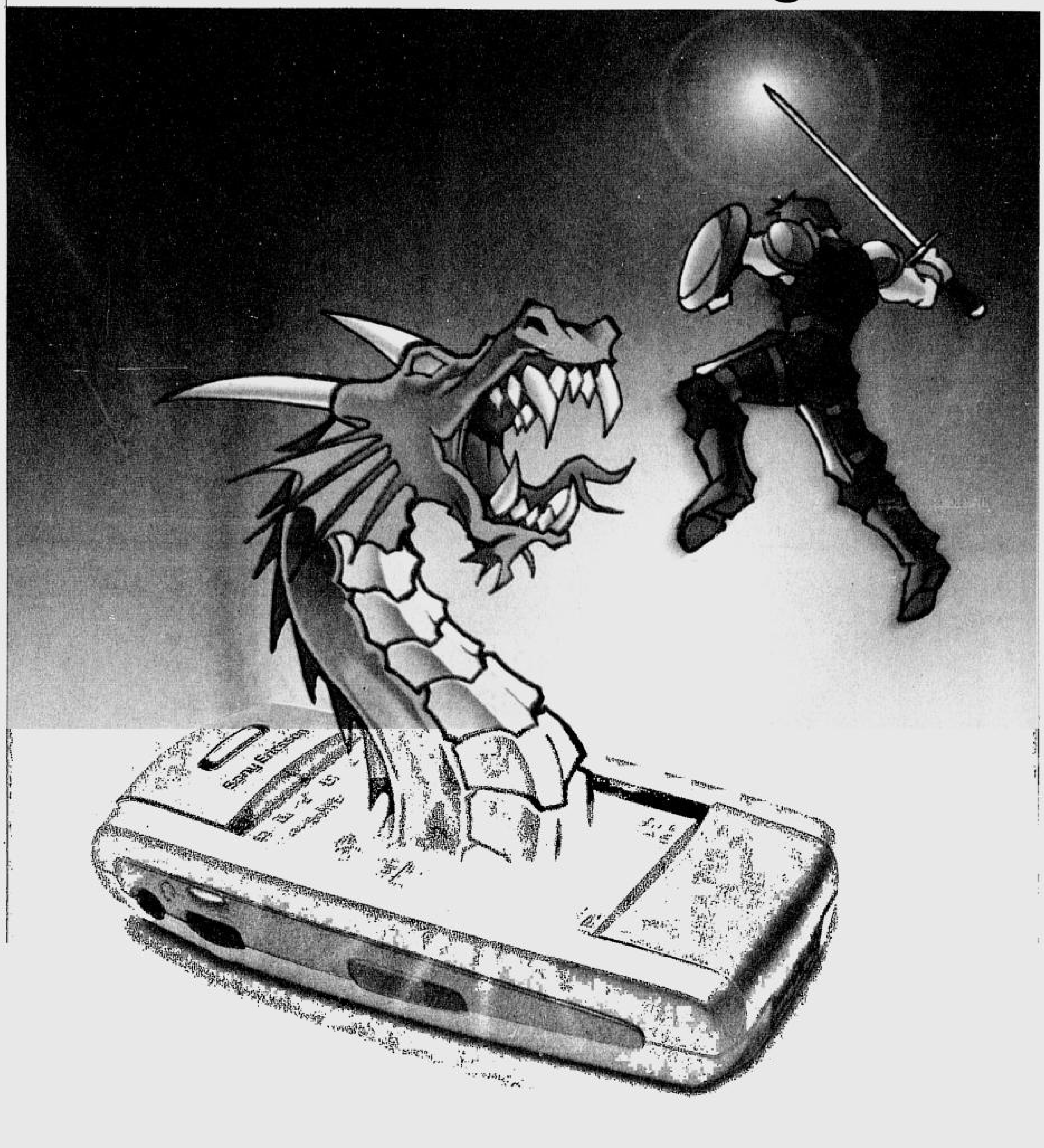
Tight Fix (P800) is a non-greasy day moisturizer that feels cool and weightless on your face, even as you feel its tightening

PULCHRITUDE/ E3

SPA Body Wash

TIGHT Fix

Sony Ericsson



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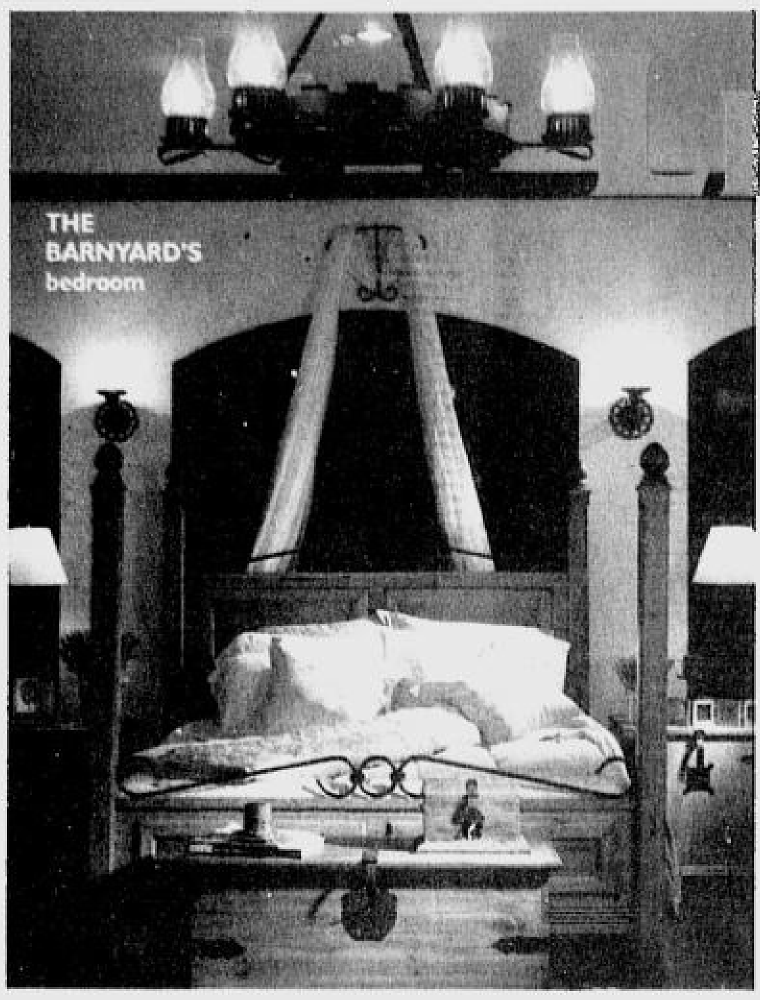

THE BARNYARD'S bedroom

Tuscany in your home

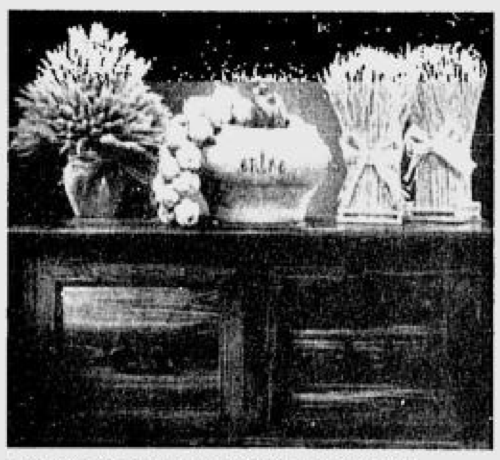
FURNITURE and residential designer Ana Margarita Gonzalez-Cuervo interprets the charms of Tuscany and Provence in her furniture and home accessories in The Barnyard at Festival Mall, Alabang, and in Fine Things by The Barnyard at Glorietta 4, Ayala Center.

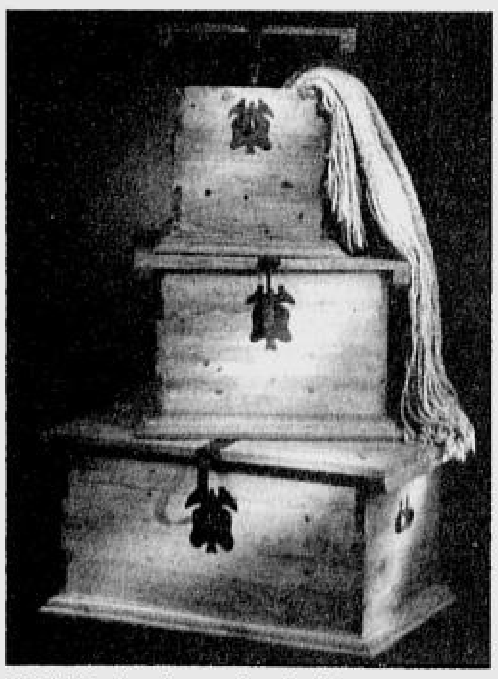
Cuervo is an interior design graduate from the American College of London in England. She takes her inspiration from nature and leans toward the Mediterranean style of relaxed living inspired by earth colors and natural materials.

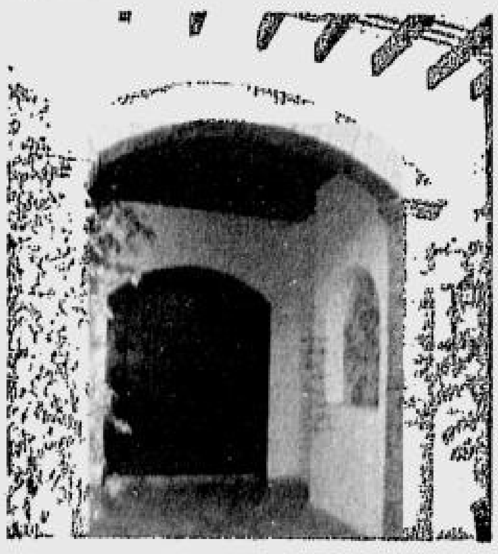
For her furniture collection, the designer uses high-grade pine and hardwood.

Cuervo started recently a design-build company called Casa Toscana.

Call 8504433 (Festival Mall) and 7575010 (Glorietta 4).


CHEST of drawers with The Barnyard accessories


RUSTIC chest boxes that double as center or side tables


HOUSE designed and built by Margarita Gonzales-Cuervo for Casa Toscana

WHAT'S ON at Robinsons

NYOY VOLANTE

Spend an afternoon with strings attached. Catch the Acoustic Genius Nyoy Volante together with Mannos in a mini-concert that's an afternoon of pure pleasure.

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Dr. Daisy Lim-Camitan,
41, Dermatologist &
Clinic owner, Dermgem

As someone whose job is to make others look good, Dr. Daisy knows she has to look good herself. "Patients come to me to look younger. I myself should be the best proof that you don't have to look your age."

With Imedeen, Dr. Daisy has achieved just that. As skin retains its essential moisture, dryness is reduced; in its place you may notice skin more evenly toned, softer and more elastic. "I get a lot of compliments -- people say I look good for my age."

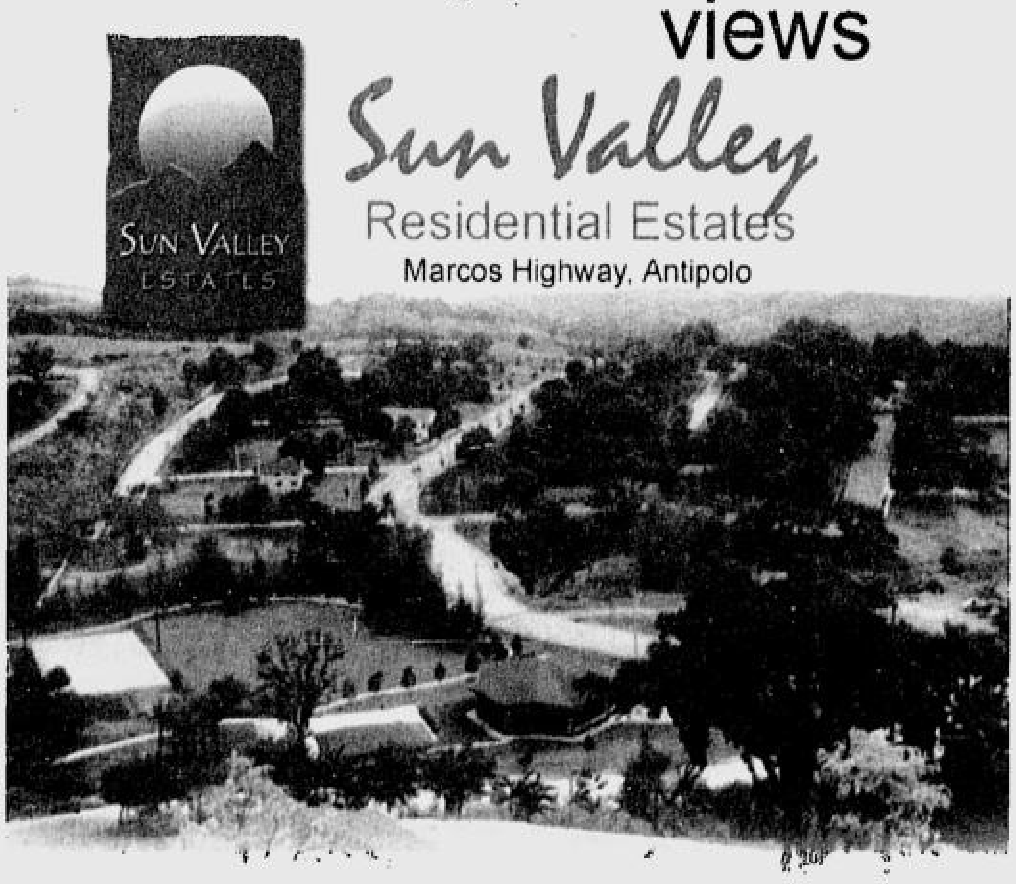
Imedeen is the skin care tablet that helps nourish and revitalize the inner layer of the skin where ageing begins.

"I always tell my patients, 'To look beautiful, one must feel beautiful inside.' Seeing how young I look gives my spirit a different kind of lift. Imedeen does wonders not just for outer beauty, but inner beauty as well. And that's something no facelift can give you."

Ultrasound images of the skin structure: denser structure implies better support and ability to hold moisture

Clinically Proven

The Skin Care Tablet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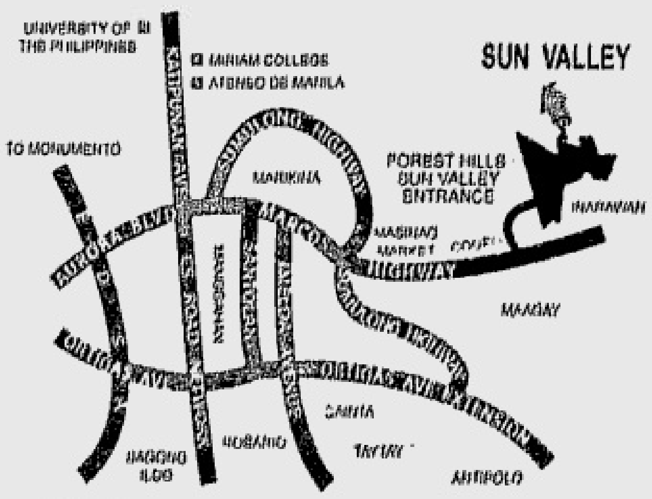

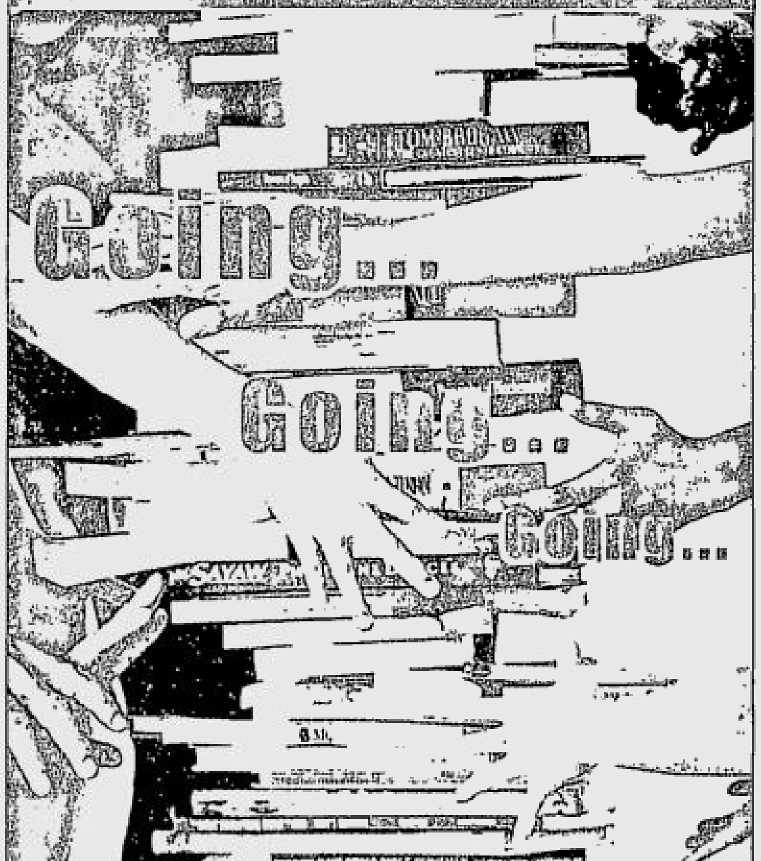
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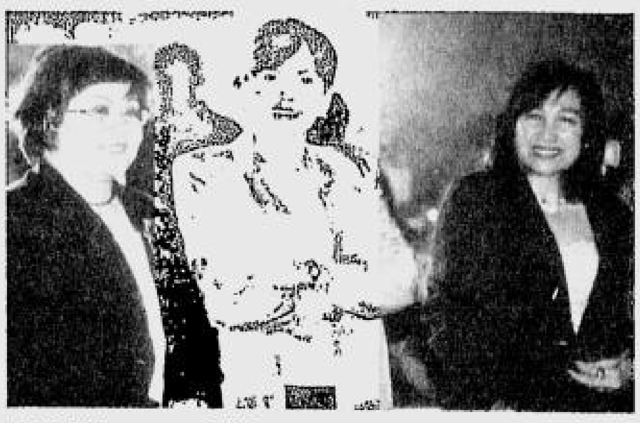
CELL phone gang: PLDT SVP for marketing Ito Ramirez, Marco Borlongan, Mary Anne Lumen, Monique Ramirez, Judith Roda, Angela Enrile-Panlilio, Cindy Lanuza-Fernandez and VP for Nokia marketing Martin Fernandez


WOMEN power: Call Center Group's VP Beth Carabuena, SVP Rose Montenegro and VP Linda Katigbak

FUN guy Mike Herlihy with beautiful faces Mark Jentes and Rosanna Escudero

Asi and burly Phone Pals give Manny Pangilinan best birthday gift

HEY, great party: PLDT'S Manny Pangilinan celebrates another fruitful year.

WITHOUT BATTING AN EYELASH

Maurice Arcache

Photos by Alex Van Hagen on Kodak Max

PERHAPS the best birthday present that PLDT's president and CEO **Manuel V. Pangilinan** recently got was the victory won by the Talk 'N Text basketball team on the eve of his birthday. That was certainly a great reason to celebrate, dahlings.

Still jubilant from his team's triumph, Pangilinan, or "MVP" to his associates, arrived at his birthday bash with the Talk 'N Text Phone Pals, led by team manager **Frankie Lim**, coach **Joel Banal**, and towering player **Asi Taulava**, whom we may not be seeing around because of the deportation cases against foreign players. A solemn thanksgiving Mass was celebrated by **Bienvenido Nebres**, SJ, the president of Ateneo de Manila University, MVP's alma mater.

The hotshots who sang "Happy Birthday" to MVP included Philippine Ambassador to Washington and PLDT board member **Albert del Rosario**; PLDT board member **Amado Bagatsing**; Energy Secretary **Vince Perez**; handsome PLDT vice president for media and corporate communications **David Nugent**; and **Menardo Jimenez Sr.** and his junior, PLDT's dynamic head of corporate communications **Menardo "Butch" Jimenez.**

Marco Borlongan, EVP and COO of NBC, did a terrific job organizing the happening, *palanggas*. Tried-and-tested La Tasca offered a sumptuous, impeccable feast. The guests drowned the meal with South Australian wine.

During dinner, MVP had a fun time rapping with his prize-winning rah-rah team. Partying with this super pack of movers and shakers were Smart Communications marketing wonder, **Boy Martinez** and Landco's **Alfredo Xerez-Bugos.**

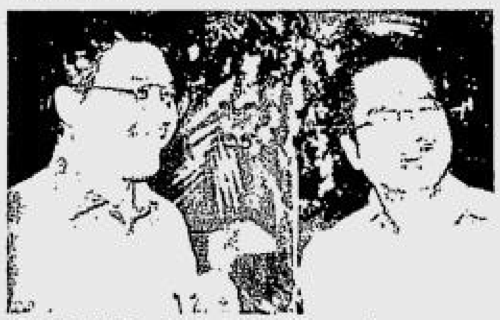
Even Manny's famille came in full force. They posed for a must-have famille portrait with him after dinner. Among the relatives were sister **Tess Pangilinan**, her husband **Ogie de los Reyes**, and their children; MVP's sister-in-law, **Milette Pangilinan**, and cousin **Ditas Villareal.**

Acoustic Jive and **Nyoy Volante** spiced up the hot-hot affair. With all the moneyed brains around, there had to be some surprise. And indeed there was singing from the wannabe singers around—including the PLDT executives.

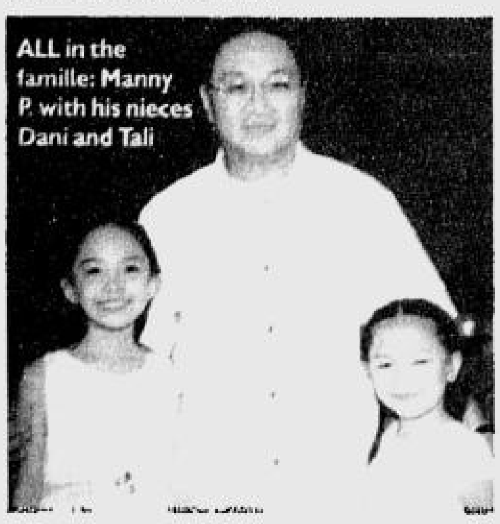
Even with all the partying taking place, like the knights of the round table, the celebrator and his knights gathered around for discussions. And as the clock ticked toward Cinderella time, the super fun night came to a close.

It was definitely a happening. Here's to you, Manny! May you have more nice surprises and fun birthdays!

THE BOSTON connection: Lito Sibayan and Eric Varvel


E-PLDT'S Ray Espinosa with popular personality Francis Lumen of NBC

KARAOKE time: Nyoy Volante and SVP Ito Ramirez (seated) ; Butch Meily, Leo Posadas and Al Panlilio (standing)


ALL in the famille: Manny P. with his nieces Dani and Tali

High tea and sympathy

Alex Van Hagen, whose camera has chronicled practically all of cosmopolitan Manille's smartest social happenings for many years now, attended a party in his honor, for a change. The ace society and wedding photographer, known in these parts as **Maurice Arcache's** "third eye," had the tables turned on him, as a clutch of our town's top socialites—all close pals—hosted a birthday for their favorite papparazzo, at the chi-chi Manila Golf Club in Makati.

Women of substance such as **May Neri, Chit Salud, Fortune Ledesma, Nini Licaros** and **Nene Leonor** summoned their admirable party energies to fete Alex in style. It was an afternoon of high tea backdropped by the relaxing view of the club's fairways. It was a laid-back affair, the kind perfectly suited to Alex's genial, easygoing disposition.

Predictably, Manille's boldface names and faces that Alex never tires to capture on cam, came with the cheeriest "Maligayang Bati" for Alex. The ultra-glam patroness of the poor, **Meldy Cojuangco**, led the glamour-check. The glamorous well-wishers included Rustan's **Mely Tantoco-Lopez, Mely Hechanova, Berna Lomotan, Marietta Santos, Suzanne Laudico, Agnes Huibonhoa, Tessie Amparo**, Rep. **Cynthia Villar, Betsy Tenchavez** and **Mellie Ablaza.** Having tea after the excellently prepared yummy afternoon snacks by the Golf Club were vivacious **Tereret Liboro, Olga Martel, Celia Cuasay, Offie Recto, Edith Rabat**, Rustan's house designer **Criselda Lontok, Fe Ng, Chit Dee, Linda Pastoral** and **Fely Avecilla**, on a rare afternoon out. "I only do this for Alex," she told us.

Manille's social luminaries who partook of the best *arroz caldo* we had tried so far and the *dinuguan* and *puto* were **Nini Valdez**, stylish **Fe Rodriguez**, adorable **Nena del Rosario** with her daughter, spit-fire **Rica**; **Nena Casimiro, Nini Layug, Ernie** and **Fe Yu, Menchu Concepcion, Cecile Limjoco**, tall **Dandi Gomez, Noni Basilio, Becky Garcia, Nona Ricafort, Chloe Periquet** and Alex's close pal, PR gal **Susan Joven**, natch!

Alex, a warm-hearted person who is so endearingly Filipino in his ways, is truly loved by so many.

Surrounded by those he so fondly immortalized in their party best, Alex couldn't ask for more. He thanked God for another healthy and fruitful year.

Spotting them

Mid-town Makati was packed with hot names making the rounds to the hottest spots. The excellent Kai Restaurant in Greenbelt 3 had diners queuing outside, waiting for a table. Inside, comfortably enjoying their yummy meal were **Doris-Magsaysay Ho** and her sisters (Doris is a partner in the resto).

With Doris were **Linda Ho McAfee**, who was with her husband **Cage** (they were in town from Hong Kong); **Helen Ho Delgado** (she had jetted in from her base in Shanghai and Hong Kong); **Chingbee** and **Bobby Cuenca**; international businessman **John Forbes**; and other hotshots, *palanggas*.

Slim-slim **Evelyn Lim Forbes** had preserved her young figure after she went to that spa in Batangas. "What's the secret?" I asked her. "Vegetables! I've become a pseudo vegetarian," she laughingly told *moi*. It's the same diet that made mega-retailer **Ricco Ocampo** lose all those pounds.

Dish, meanwhile, was packed with the swinging crowd rocking to the super sounds of the Pido band and the fabulous singing of Jay R.

Easily the standouts in the crowd were the super good looking **Maxwell** brothers, **Jesse** and **Patrick**, who were with their eyecatching sister **Alexandra** and equally handsome cousins, **Zachan** and **Matthew McAfee.** They were all back home from schooling abroad.

Finally, I checked out Dream Bar and it was jumping with people. I was glad the place was alive again as it had so many fun, endless nights during its Giraffe days.

The well-liked **Ito Feliciano** was seeing to it that all was well, when we were not conversing with him and *el guapo* **Luis de Terry.**

The best part about my Dream drop-by was—surprise, surprise—seeing our super pals, **Pepys Yulo** and her husband, popular **Dr. Bill Cammack.** They were with one of Dream's owners, **Quicho Bubot.**

"When did you arrive from Australia?" I asked.

"Oh, we've been here for a while now. As you know, we live there permanently now and come back to Manila for three to four months visiting, then back home," she said.

We promised to catch each other soon before she leaves again.

At Nuvo, there was nobody really interesting except for the sexy-movie star, **Maui Taylor**, who breezed in with her handsome boyfriend and some pals. She had us all watching her table, especially when she and her lover got really cozy-cozy together.

And young, sultry southern belle **Allana Montelibano** was having a fun night out.

At V, late-late owls rocked the place. The sounds were so good that traffic-stopper **Tessa Prieto Valdes** couldn't help but body-dance with Anton S.D.

During lunch the other day, one really heavyweight businessman pulled me aside and said, "Maurice, I will never repeat gossip, so please listen carefully."

Yeah, I thought, big deal. He didn't want to repeat gossip, but what else could you do with it? So I listened.

Well, his gossip was so interesting that I only wish I knew the person he was talking about!

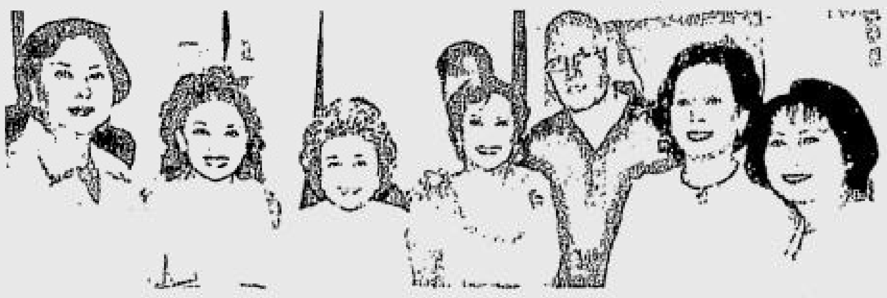
He told me about some congressman who the people voted for simply because they wanted him to get out of their town, would you believe?

CLOSE pals Chloe Romulo-Periquet, Meldy Cojuangco and Nene Leonor

FE Rodriguez with Helen Ong and Agnes Huibonhoa

BUSINESS tycoon Fe and Ernie Yu with Chit Dee and Nini Valdez

THE ORGANIZERS watch as birthday boy blows out another year. Chit Salud, Fortune Ledesma, Alex V. H., Nini Licaros, Evie Costa and May Neri


PALS from way back: Fely Avecilla with Becky Garcia, Cecille Limjoco, Linda Pastoral, Alex V. H., Chit Dee and Fe Ng

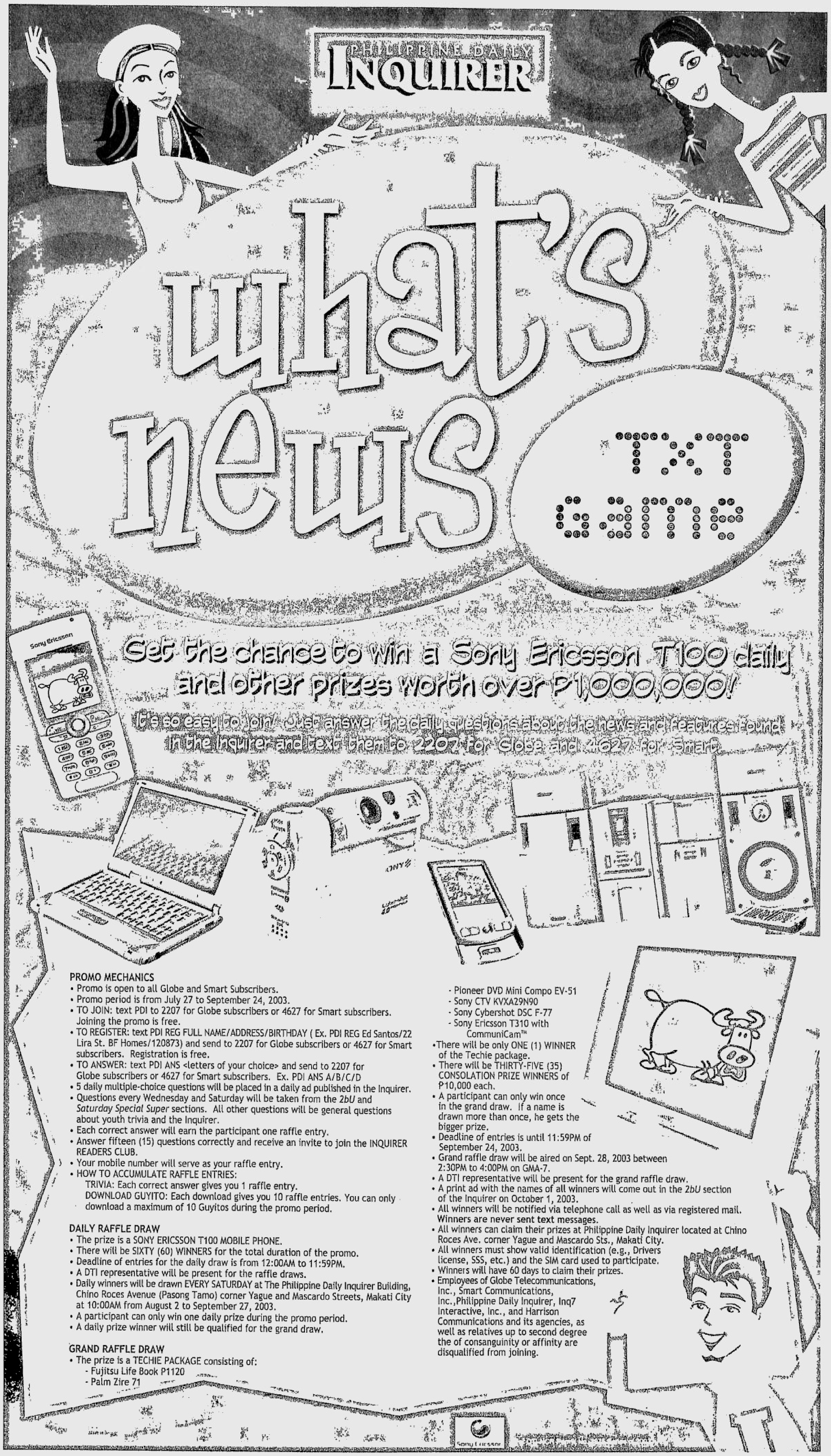
MELLIE Ablaza, Nini Licaros, the celebrator and Celia Cuasay (standing); Nena del Rosario, Menchu Tantoco and luminous pearl Baby Cruz (seated)

HEAVYWEIGHT magnates: Fritz Server with lawyer Cesar Buenaventura, man of the hour MVP, Doy Vea and NTT adviser Suzuki Taketo

PLDT mega director, well-respected Amado Bagatsing with Paul Gueco and Errol Rara

MARILOU with her husband, PLDT hotshot Boy Martinez and Candy Palisoc

MITZI Pangilinan with Mica Areza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PROMO MECHANICS

- Promo is open to all Globe and Smart Subscribers.
- Promo period is from July 27 to September 24, 2003.
- TO JOIN: text PDI to 2207 for Globe subscribers or 4627 for Smart subscribers. Joining the promo is free.
- TO REGISTER: text PDI REG FULL NAME/ADDRESS/BIRTHDAY (Ex. PDI REG Ed Santos/22 Lira St. BF Homes/120873) and send to 2207 for Globe subscribers or 4627 for Smart subscribers. Registration is free.
- TO ANSWER: text PDI ANS <letters of your choice> and send to 2207 for Globe subscribers or 4627 for Smart subscribers. Ex. PDI ANS A/B/C/D
- 5 daily multiple-choice questions will be placed in a daily ad published in the Inquirer.
- Questions every Wednesday and Saturday will be taken from the *2bU* and *Saturday Special Super* sections. All other questions will be general questions about youth trivia and the Inquirer.
- Each correct answer will earn the participant one raffle entry.
- Answer fifteen (15) questions correctly and receive an invite to join the INQUIRER READERS CLUB.
- Your mobile number will serve as your raffle entry.
- HOW TO ACCUMULATE RAFFLE ENTRIES:
  TRIVIA: Each correct answer gives you 1 raffle entry.
  DOWNLOAD GUYITO: Each download gives you 10 raffle entries. You can only download a maximum of 10 Guyitos during the promo period.

DAILY RAFFLE DRAW

- The prize is a SONY ERICSSON T100 MOBILE PHONE.
- There will be SIXTY (60) WINNERS for the total duration of the promo.
- Deadline of entries for the daily draw is from 12:00AM to 11:59PM.
- A DTI representative will be present for the raffle draws.
- Daily winners will be drawn EVERY SATURDAY at The Philippine Daily Inquirer Building, Chino Roces Avenue (Pasong Tamo) corner Yague and Mascardo Streets, Makati City at 10:00AM from August 2 to September 27, 2003.
- A participant can only win one daily prize during the promo period.
- A daily prize winner will still be qualified for the grand draw.

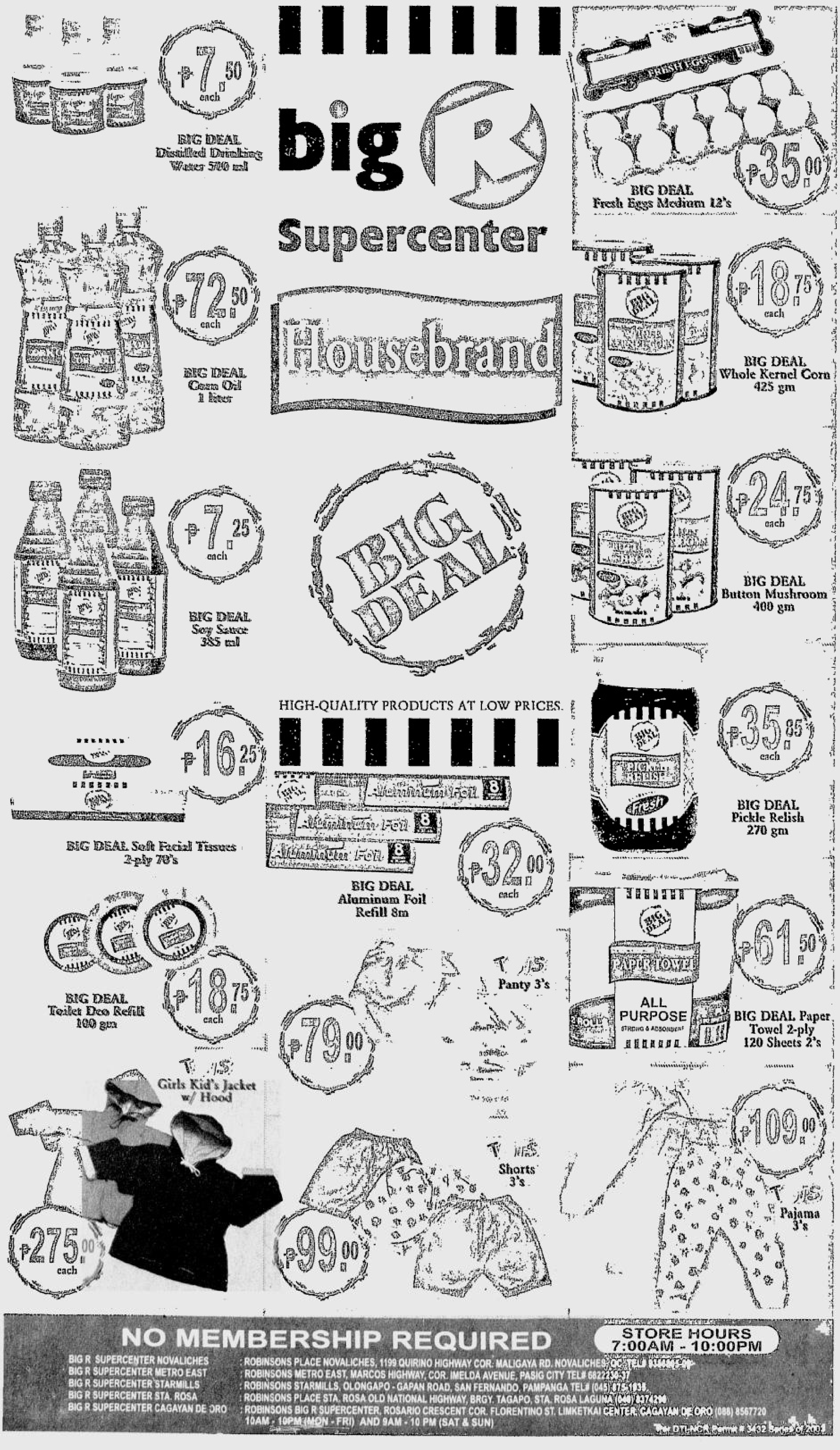
GRAND RAFFLE DRAW

- The prize is a TECHIE PACKAGE consisting of:
  - Fujitsu Life Book P1120
  - Palm Zire 71
  - Pioneer DVD Mini Compo EV-51
  - Sony CTV KVXA29N90
  - Sony Cybershot DSC F-77
  - Sony Ericsson T310 with CommuniCam™
- There will be only ONE (1) WINNER of the Techie package.
- There will be THIRTY-FIVE (35) CONSOLATION PRIZE WINNERS of ₱10,000 each.
- A participant can only win once in the grand draw. If a name is drawn more than once, he gets the bigger prize.
- Deadline of entries is until 11:59PM of September 24, 2003.
- Grand raffle draw will be aired on Sept. 28, 2003 between 2:30PM to 4:00PM on GMA-7.
- A DTI representative will be present for the grand raffle draw.
- A print ad with the names of all winners will come out in the *2bU* section of the Inquirer on October 1, 2003.
- All winners will be notified via telephone call as well as via registered mail. **Winners are never sent text messages.**
- All winners can claim their prizes at Philippine Daily Inquirer located at Chino Roces Ave. corner Yague and Mascardo Sts., Makati City.
- All winners must show valid identification (e.g., Drivers license, SSS, etc.) and the SIM card used to participate.
- Winners will have 60 days to claim their prizes.
- Employees of Globe Telecommunications, Inc., Smart Communications, Inc.,Philippine Daily Inquirer, Inq7 Interactive, Inc., and Harrison Communications and its agencies, as well as relatives up to second degree the of consanguinity or affinity are disqualified from joining.

Mid-year orchid show opens Aug. 29

THE PHILIPPINE Orchid Society, Inc. will hold its 57th Mid-Year Orchid and Garden Show Aug. 29-Sept. 8 at the lagoon island, Orchidarium Park, Quezon City Hall complex corner Elliptical Road and East Avenue, Quezon City. Quezon City Mayor Feliciano Belmonte will formally open the exhibit. The by-invitation only opening will be held Aug. 28, 4 p.m. The exhibit will be open to the public 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. Aug. 29-Sept. 8. The show will feature landscapes using orchids, both local and imported species, and hybrids. There will also be lecture-demonstrations to be held 2-6 p.m. daily. Lecturers include Rolita Spowart, Dendrobium Culture, Aug. 29; Vic Chin, Jr., Cattleya Culture, Aug. 30; Norberto Bautista, Orchid Breeding and Propagation Techniques, Aug. 31; C. V. Lazaro, Vanda Culture, Sept. 1; Dr. Vic Saplala, Controlling Orchid Pests and Diseases, Sept. 2; and Chin on Phalaenopsis Culture, Sept. 3. Angie Salabit discuss Starting Your Orchid Business, Sept. 4; Andres Golamco, Jr., Orchid Potting Techniques, Sept. 5; Wilhelm Ortaliz, Orchid Flower Arrangement, Sept. 6; Kelvin Manubay, Care of Orchid Species and Botanicals, Sept. 7; and Serapion S. Metilla, Ikebana Floral Art, Sept. 8. Call 9294425.

SOME of the members of the Mid-Year Orchid Show working committee with the *Waling-waling* now in season. From left, Cora Purificacion, commercial; Mable Chua, invitation; club president Rex Puentespina, special events; Jun Golamco, publication; Carlos Lazaro, overall show chair; and Jose Mari Lacandula, publicity. Other committee chairs are Rolita Spowart, physical arrangement; Vic Chin Jr., exhibit; Norberto Bautista, education/lectures; and Remedios Santilices and Arvee Sarian, promotion.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₱35.00 BIG DEAL Fresh Eggs Medium 12's

₱18.75 each BIG DEAL Whole Kernel Corn 425 gm

₱24.75 each BIG DEAL Button Mushroom 400 gm

₱35.85 each BIG DEAL Pickle Relish 270 gm

₱61.50 BIG DEAL Paper Towel 2-ply 120 Sheets 2's

Panty 3's ₱79.00

Girls Kid's Jacket w/ Hood ₱275.00 each

Shorts 3's ₱99.00

Pajama 3's ₱109.00

NO MEMBERSHIP REQUIRED

STORE HOURS
7:00AM - 10:00PM

BIG R SUPERCENTER NOVALICHES : ROBINSONS PLACE NOVALICHES, 1199 QUIRINO HIGHWAY COR. MALIGAYA RD. NOVALICHES, QC. TEL# [illegible]
BIG R SUPERCENTER METRO EAST : ROBINSONS METRO EAST, MARCOS HIGHWAY, COR. IMELDA AVENUE, PASIG CITY TEL# 6822230-37
BIG R SUPERCENTER STARMILLS : ROBINSONS STARMILLS, OLONGAPO - GAPAN ROAD, SAN FERNANDO, PAMPANGA TEL# (045) 875-1835
BIG R SUPERCENTER STA. ROSA : ROBINSONS PLACE STA. ROSA OLD NATIONAL HIGHWAY, BRGY. TAGAPO, STA. ROSA LAGUNA (049) 8374296
BIG R SUPERCENTER CAGAYAN DE ORO : ROBINSONS BIG R SUPERCENTER, ROSARIO CRESCENT COR. FLORENTINO ST. LIMKETKAI CENTER, CAGAYAN DE ORO (088) 8567720 10AM - 10PM (MON - FRI) AND 9AM - 10 PM (SAT & SUN)

Per DTI-NCR Permit # 3432 Series of 2003

Manila international book fair slated

THE PUBLISHING industry's most reputable companies are set to gather for the 24th Manila International Book Fair on Aug. 30-Sept. 7 at Megatrade Hall, Building B, SM Megamall. Call 8960682/95 or e-mail ptrade@philonline.com

GOINGS ON

CARNIVAL SHOW. Disney Channel will stage Studio D-Tour carnival tomorrow at Alabang Town Center and on Aug. 24 at Glorietta Mall. The four country roadshow will proceed to Korea, Malaysia and Singapore.

PARENTING WORKSHOP. The Center for Family Ministries (Cefam) will conduct "Pep Teens Parenting Workshop" tomorrow, 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., at Cefam, Ateneo de Manila University, Loyola Heights, QC. Call 4264289 to 92.

VICTORIA'S PRESENTATION. Cory Quirino, INQUIRER beauty and wellness columnist, will grace the Victoria's Cameo presentation on Aug. 29, 4 p.m. at the World Trade Center during the Women's World 2003 Exhibit. She will talk about women and jewelry. The presentation is open to the public for free. Call 7363856 or e-mail cameobyvictoria@yahoo.com.

FASHION SHOW. John Robert Powers will stage a fashion show billed "Clash of the Denims" today at 5 p.m. at SM Fairview. Denim collections of Levi's, Wrangler, RRJ, Bobson and Company B will be featured. Call 8929511.

LECTURE. The Japan Foundation Manila Office will hold a lecture on "A Glimpse of Japan: In the Eyes of a Filipino Child" on Aug. 28, 2-5 p.m. at the Educational Media Center, 2/F, Main Bldg., Manila Science High School, Taft Ave. cor. Padre Faura St., Manila. Call 8116155 to 58 and 7357037 to 38.

WORKSHOP. The Society of Portrait Photographers of the Philippines will conduct workshops on fashion photography on Aug. 23 and 31 and wedding photography on Aug. 24 and 30. Call 8061346/8217978.

BOOK LAUNCH. Anvil Publishing will launch "Congressman Kalog," Larry Alcala's final collection of comic strips before his death in 2002 on Aug. 23, 4 p.m. at UP College of Fine Arts Gallery. Call 6719235/1899.

STUDY PROGRAM. The Japan Foundation will hold the 2003 Secondary School Educators' Study Tour Program on Sept. 1, 2:30 p.m. at the Japan Foundation Manila office. Call 8116155 to 58.

COCONUT FESTIVAL. The Philippine Coconut Authority will spearhead the celebration of the 2nd National Coconut Festival and 2003 National Coconut Week on Aug. 24-30 at PCA compound, Diliman, QC. Call 9284501 to 09.

RAFFLE PROMO. Bookware Publishing Corp.'s ongoing Nokia 7650 raffle promo gives away 3310 models every month while a 7650 will be given away in the grand draw. Call 6318893 to 94.

PROMO. I love Bratz promo is ongoing until Aug. 31 at Kidz Station, Rockwell Center, Makati. The contest is open to children, 7-16 years old.

WORKSHOP. The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens workshop will be held Sept. 6 and 13. A session to orient parents about what their children will be learning is set on Aug. 30. Call 4266001.

CONTEST. Philtrade Exhibits will host the 2003 Candle Design Awards' final judgement on Nov. 29 at Araneta Center Trade Hall. Call 8207879/1570.

EXHIBIT. The Philippine Home Theater Experience will be held Oct. 23-25 at Dusit Hotel Nikko in Makati. Call 8955735/2363.

COMPETITION. Floral Arts & Crafts Design Center, Inc. (FACDCI) will hold a floristry competition on Sept. 14 at Fr. Blanco's Garden, Intramuros, Manila, 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Call FACDCI at 7228644/7258986; Casa Flores de Belen, 8140847/8939626; and Kyoto Flower Shop, 5261367.

EVENT. The OFW Family Club will hold a grand OFW family day on Sept. 7 at the Philippine Trade Training Center, Roxas Boulevard, Pasay City. Call 5267522/15.

CONTEST. The UPLB Chemical Society is now accepting entries to the Kapnayan 2003 essay-writing and poster-making contests on Nov. 18. Deadline is on Sept. 26. Submit entries to the office of UPLB Chemical Society, Institute of Chemistry, Physical Sciences Building, UP Los Baños College, Laguna 4031 or e-mail chemsoc1964@yahoo.com.

PROMO. Jag Jeans' Bag Your Denim promo will be held Aug. 29-Sept. 26. For every purchase of Jag pants or denim jacket, get a free denim sling bag. Jag Jeans is available at all SM Department Stores, Robinsons Malls, Isetann, Ever, The Landmark, Sta. Lucia East, Ali Mall, Farmer's Plaza, Fairmart Cubao, Glorietta 1, Jaka Plaza and Alabang Town Center.

CONCERT. The Sinagtala Performing Arts Series continues tonight at 8 at Phil-Amlife Theater, along United Nations Avenue, with The Sopranos: Rachelle Gerodias, Lilac Caña and Thea Tadiar. Call 7261567.

ANNIVERSARY. Maryknoll/Miriam College will hold "Celebrate with '78!" to mark the 77th anniversary of Miriam College, Maryknoll High School Class of 1978. The grand alumni homecoming is set on Sept. 6, 3-11 p.m. at Miriam College Grounds, Katipunan Avenue, QC. Call 4260173 or 5805400 local 1187.